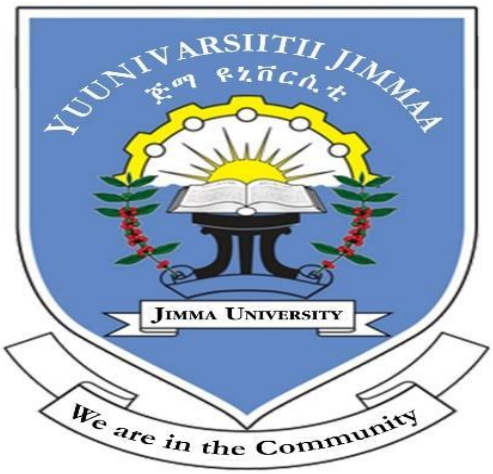

TEACHING HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE AND THINKING SKILLS THROUGH READING LIKE A HISTORIAN STRATEGY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

BY

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DBR: Design-Based Research

EGECF: Ethiopian General Education Curriculum Framework

ETP: Education and Training Policy

ESDP: Education Sector Development Plan

EPRDF: Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front.

FDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

HGW: Horro Guduru Wallaga

HTS: Historical Thinking Skills

HTTP: Historical Thinking Pedagogy

GEQIP: General Education Quality Improvement Program

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

MoE: Ministry of Education

MMR: Mixed Method Research

RLH: Reading Like a Historian

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

ABSTRACT

In response to Ethiopia's ongoing educational reform, which emphasizes competency-based learning and 21st-century skills, this study explores the integration of the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) strategy into secondary school history education. The study addresses critical challenges in Ethiopian history instruction, including teacher-centered pedagogy, factual memorization, and misalignment between curriculum goals and assessment practices. It seeks to investigate the epistemological beliefs of teachers, the cognitive level of history textbook objectives and assessments, and the impact of RLH on student motivation, engagement, and historical thinking. Employing a Design-Based Research (DBR) approach within a mixed-methods framework, the study was implemented in two secondary schools over seven weeks, involving 134 Grade 10 students. Qualitative data were collected through interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, while quantitative data were drawn from pre- and post-tests and surveys. The intervention focused on a custom-designed unit around the theme "Social, Economic, and Political Developments in Ethiopia from the mid-19th century to 1941." Findings reveal a profound misalignment between curriculum aspirations and classroom realities. Textbook analysis showed a dominance of lower-order cognitive demands, with over 65% of assessments focused on factual recall. Teachers exhibited limited preparedness to implement historical thinking pedagogy due to epistemological beliefs shaped by traditional instructional norms. However, the RLH intervention significantly enhanced student engagement, critical inquiry, and historical source analysis skills. Students demonstrated increased ability in sourcing, corroboration, contextualization, and constructing evidence-based historical arguments. The study concludes that integrating the RLH strategy within the Ethiopian context is both feasible and impactful by providing teachers a sustained professional development and contextualized instructional support. It proposes four design principles to guide future implementations: grounding instruction in central historical questions, using multiple source types, teaching explicit historical reading strategies, and fostering discussion-based classrooms. Implications include curriculum revision to embed inquiry tasks, assessment reform aligned with higher-order skills and policy support for teacher training. The study offers a scalable model for aligning Ethiopian history education with national curriculum goals and international standards for historical thinking.

Keywords: *Reading Like a Historian (RLH), Historical Thinking Skills (HTS), Design-Based Research (DBR), History Education, Ethiopia, Competency-Based Learning, Teacher Professional Development, Curriculum Reform.*

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This section introduces the Ethiopian curricular context, focusing on its historiography, socio-political, cultural, and educational aspects, with a special emphasis on the history of history education and its evolving purpose in Ethiopia. The teaching of history has long been a fundamental component of educational curricula worldwide, serving as a critical lens through which to understand contemporary society and anticipate future developments.

1.1. Background of the Study

Over the past three decades, there has been a significant expansion in international scholarship on history teaching, learning, and cognition, which has contributed to the development of historical thinking concepts among students in secondary and even elementary schools. This growth reflects a broader recognition of the importance of history education in fostering critical thinking and intercultural competence (Levesque, and Penney Clark, 2018). Sam Wineburg's work, particularly his 2001 book "Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts," has been pivotal in transforming the teaching and learning of history. His research emphasizes the importance of historical thinking concepts and understanding students' prior knowledge, reshaping educational practices to improve historical understanding in classrooms (Drake, 2002). The emphasis on historical thinking in education seeks to cultivate critical analytical skills, moving beyond memorization to a deeper understanding of history. While this approach is gaining traction in some regions, challenges remain in its global implementation particularly in Africa (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Monte-Sano, & Reisman, 2015, Boadu, 2020).

To understand the context of history education in Ethiopia, I have approached several literature reviews and found that there are numerous issues that challenge history learning in Ethiopia. Some of the issues most historians and history educators shared in common have stated in the study conducted by Geshere et al (2024). However, in this study I have decided to deal with two fundamental issues categorized as the problems related to biased historical sources and the way history is taught in the schools.

Ethiopian historiography since the 1960s has been significantly shaped by political agendas aimed at nation-building, often aligning historical narratives with the ruling political ideology. This has led to a dominant narrative that glorifies dynastic successes while marginalizing alternative histories and dissenting voices, contributing to ongoing tensions and conflicts within Ethiopia (Marzagora, 2017; Huber, 2020). Beginning in the 1970s, there was a significant shift in historiography that began to challenge this dominant narrative. The critiques of the Great Tradition and the rise of counter-narratives in Ethiopian historiography mark a critical evolution towards a more inclusive understanding of the nation's history. By incorporating diverse perspectives, these narratives challenge the dominant state-centric discourse and contribute to a more nuanced and comprehensive historiographical landscape (Clapham, 2002; Marzagora, 2017; Abbink, 2020).

In Ethiopia, history education has been manipulated for political purposes under different regimes since its inception. For instance, during the imperial regimes, Ethiopian history education focused on the “Solomonic” lineage of Ethiopian emperors, legitimizing the monarchy and consolidating state power. The Derg established a Marxist-Leninist state, reshaping education to align with its socialist ideology. The EPRDF aimed to foster national identity and unity among Ethiopia's diverse ethnic groups, promoting resistance against oppression. This implies that history education is closely tied to the prevailing political ideologies of different regimes, resulting in a curriculum prioritizing elite narratives over inclusive historical accounts (Toggia, 2008; Clapham, 2002; Huber, 2021; Marzagora, 2017; Sorenson, 1992).

Crummey (2001) and Toggia (2008) identified significant limitations in studying Ethiopian history, historians were trapped by biased sources and less critical of the state's claims. Toggia (2008) argues that Ethiopia's history has been systematized, with educational materials often disconnected from domain-specific knowledge. Huber (2020) argues that high school history education in Ethiopia has a colonial character, focusing on European and American history. Abbink (2020) critiques the tension in historical narratives, particularly in Ethiopian textbooks under the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Despite attempts to incorporate aspects more reflective of Ethiopian people's experiences, the narrative remains heavily skewed toward political and battlefields.

The second issues are related to the way history is taught and perceived in the schools. Over the past three decades, history education has shifted from rote memorization to fostering historical thinking concepts, emphasizing critical analysis and inquiry-based learning. This transformation aims to make history more engaging and relevant by developing students' abilities to think like historians (Levesque, & Clark, 2018; Keirn, & Martin, 2012; Monte-Sano, 2011; Wineburg, 2001; Bohan, & Davis, 1998; Ercikan, & Seixas, 2015).

Despite decades of research on historical thinking, the teaching of history in Ethiopian schools is hindered by traditional teaching methods, resource limitations, and cultural diversity challenges (Wondemtegegn, & Mekonnen, 2022; Joshi & Vespoor, 2013). In the twenty-first century, history education in Ethiopia is critiqued for its reliance on a chronological and linear outline of events rather than thematic approach, which often aligns with dynastic eras and narratives of power elites. This approach is seen as perpetuating a conventional periodization that may not fully represent the diverse historical narratives within the country.

The Ministry of Education has also recognized significant shortcomings in the current educational system, particularly its ability to foster critical thinking among students. The curriculum has been criticized for focusing on memorization and content mastery, which mirrors traditional religious education models rather than promoting active engagement and critical analysis. The system is described as one that “masters content and preaches it” (MoE, 2018, p. 29).

The recent curriculum reform in Ethiopia marks a significant shift from an objective-based to a competency-based education model, aiming to address local needs and align with global educational trends (MoE, 2020). This shift, led by the Ministry of Education, aims to provide “quality and equitable education for all” and emphasizes the development of core competencies essential for the 21st century (p. 4). These competencies include critical thinking, problem-solving, creative thinking, communication, collaboration, leadership, decision-making, digital literacy, cultural identity, and global citizenship (MoE, 2022; UNESCO, 2015b). To this end, the General Curriculum Framework (2020) for secondary school expects teachers to emphasize the development of 21st-century core competencies, which include learning to learn, critical thinking,

creative thinking, communication, collaboration, leadership, digital literacy, and global citizenship. This requires teachers to be high-level knowledge workers and to continually expand their professional knowledge.

Research revealed that the success of any curriculum reform is significantly influenced by how effectively teachers implement it in the classroom (Thornton, 2005; Joshi & Vespoor, 2013). In this regard, McKinsey, & McKinsey, 2007) underscore the pivotal role of teacher quality in educational reform. Enhancing teacher competence, instructional practices, and professional development are essential strategies for improving student outcomes. These findings support the notion that the success of educational quality is fundamentally linked to the quality of their teachers and the effectiveness of their instructional methods.

The recent curriculum reform suggests a shift from content-driven curricula to competence- or outcomes-based education (OBE) which are more aligned to the participatory pedagogies. This approach ensures that learners acquire specific skills, knowledge, and attitudes that prepare them for real-world applications. These reforms are, however, not always successful in meeting their goals. Without realistic support and scaffolding for learning, adequate training and resources, teachers may struggle to move away from traditional methods. Teachers are often not consulted in curriculum design posing a challenge for teachers attempting to implement it. There is a frequent mismatch between curriculum aims and mode of assessment, which produces contradiction in reforms. If assessments do not align with competency-based learning goals, students may focus on passing tests rather than developing real skills (Westbrook, 2013).

In the domain of history education, scholars have explored numerous instructional approaches aimed at assisting students and examining the role of teachers in secondary school history instruction. Teaching students to think and read like historians has been shown to significantly enhance their historical content knowledge and critical thinking, transferability of skills, mastery of factual historical knowledge, and general reading comprehension (Wineburg, 1991a, 1991b; Reisman, 2012a, b; Nokes et al., 2007). This approach not only makes history more engaging but also equips students with essential skills for academic and societal challenges in preparing them not just as learners of history but also as informed citizens capable of navigating complex

societal issues (Reisman, 2012; VanSledright, 2004; Wineburg, Martin, & Monte-Sano, 2012; Monte-Sano, De La Paz, & Felton, 2014; Wineburg, & Reisman, 2015; Nokes, 2022).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

In Ethiopia, where the landscape of historical narratives is often skewed, biased, distorted, with many textbook authors and government accounts rarely facing scrutiny. This situation has fostered an environment where historical sources may be manipulated to align with governmental perspectives. As a result, questioning the authenticity of these sources is crucial. The existing educational materials tend to be inadequate, lacking the necessary quality and failing to align properly with the curriculum framework. They often present knowledge as mere facts rather than fostering skill development and instilling values that are relevant to the subject matter.

Additionally, there is a limited emphasis on helping students cultivate core competencies through engaging and thought-provoking activities. In light of these challenges, it is essential to explore alternative pedagogical practices that can complement the existing materials. Integrating these practices as extracurricular activities could significantly enhance the objectives outlined in the revised Curriculum Framework for Ethiopian secondary schools.

Calls for a shift from traditional lecture-based teaching to more interactive and student-centered methodologies in Ethiopia's General Education Curriculum Framework (2020) have gained attention. Scholars, educators, and policymakers are increasingly recognizing that conventional teaching strategies are outdated and insufficient for fostering the skills necessary for the 21st century. The teaching of history in Ethiopian secondary schools faces significant criticism for being closely tied to state ideologies and collective memory approaches. Despite the introduction of the new curricula in the 21st century, content and pedagogical practices in Ethiopian history education have remained largely unchanged. This stagnation raises concerns about the effectiveness of history teaching in fostering critical thinking and a nuanced understanding of the past (Abbink, 2020, p. 6).

There is substantial literature that criticizes this bias, with a vast array of new sources and interpretations questioning the monopoly of collective memory, and the history of political thought (Grever, & Stuurman, 2007, Seixas, 2007). Lévesque (2008) criticized the limitations of 'collective memory' as it lacks a scientific basis and fails to address the challenges posed by our globalized world, where conflicting memories and claims about the past emerge. This creates a dilemma for educators who strive to promote critical thinking in their students. Shalini Dixit recalled that the collective memory approach to teaching history has two major problems. First, who decides the best version of the past to be taught in schools? Second, which is truly the "best" version of the past? When state and government representatives select the "best" historical narrative, they inevitably end up representing their ideological biases. As a result, students are tasked with simply consuming the prevailing "zeitgeist" rather than critically engaging with history (Dixit, 2021, p.78). This approach may lead to history being perceived as a meaningless series of names and dates, or as dogmatic dictates with which students fail to establish any genuine connection. Vansledright (2010, p.66) argues that students who are exposed mainly to the collective memory approach to the teaching of history tend to possess a *naïve realist* position. The naïve realists passively accept historical narratives and perspectives presented in history textbooks at face value without questioning their authenticity. They view historical accounts as direct representations of the past and treat them as established, unquestionable knowledge. These students focus on acquiring this “received” knowledge rather than critically examining and constructing their own understanding of history.

Moreover, many history teachers excessively depend on conventional teaching methods, such as lengthy lectures in which students simply listen without actively engaging (Wondimagegn, & Mekonnen, 2022). Students are increasingly becoming resistant to learning because of their dissatisfaction with abstract concepts in hearing or reading (Teferra et al., 2018). This conventional approach can make it difficult for students to stay focused, leading to waning interest in the subject. This conventional history teaching method, particularly those focused on rote memorization and a rigid approach, can lead to several negative outcomes for students. Some of these negative outcomes are neglecting the importance of sparking students' curiosity and interest, making history classroom dull and uninteresting, hindering students from engaging and deep learning, and lead them to develop misunderstandings about history (Kirpik, 2009).

Research conducted on secondary grade classrooms indicates that, despite significant efforts to promote active learning, continuous assessment, reflective teaching, and the cultivation of higher-order thinking skills, and action research studies and observations, findings reveal that Ethiopian classrooms across secondary educational levels predominantly maintain a teacher-centered approach. Instruction is primarily didactic, with minimal evidence of inquiry-based methods, the enhancement of metacognitive abilities, or the promotion of creativity. Most academic subjects are largely defined by extensive teacher-led discussions, students' focus on memorizing low-level facts, and a passive approach to learning (Joshi and Vespoor, 2012).

To address the challenges in history education and support the General Education Curriculum Framework, it is essential to consider the transformative approach advocated by Banks (1995, p. 22). His assertion that "when teaching is transformed, the content of the curriculum, pedagogy, and the ways in which students learn are substantially modified" highlights the need for a comprehensive reform in educational practices.

In the domain of history education, teaching substantive historical contents and historical thinking concepts through Reading like a Historian method is verified as an innovative and transformative teaching and learning of history within and beyond history classroom, which is characterized by a curriculum organized around central historical questions. Working with historical sources, applying Reading Like a Historian and organizing powerful concepts to form the structure of history, involving students in performance-based activities. Actively engaging in alternative assessment beyond textbook limitation, require students to participate in personal, social, and civic action to make their classrooms, schools, and communities more democratic and just (Wineburg et al., 2012; Reisman, 2012, Banks, 1995). Additionally, it aligns with the Twenty-First Century Skills and the objectives of history education as introduced in the Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2018-30). Therefore, teaching historical contents and historical thinking concepts through Reading Like a Historian is one way to achieve quality instruction in history education and bridge the curriculum gaps as rigorous research has indicated. This method taught pupils how to investigate historical questions by employing reading strategies such as sourcing, contextualizing, corroborating, and close reading. Instead of

memorizing historical facts, pupils assessed the reliability of numerous viewpoints on historical issues.

The purpose of this study is to establish adaptable design principles for interventions that encourage both teachers and students to make history teaching and learning active and participatory. The Reading Like a Historian strategy has been identified with its pillars of exercises such as sourcing, contextualization, corroboration and close reading. This strategy is becoming universal and adaptable, promoting critical engagement with historical texts, encouraging students to think and analyze like historians (Nokes et al., 2007).

To foster active and participatory history classrooms, it is crucial to adopt design-based research intervention to help both teachers and students in the teaching and learning process. However, to effectively implement the Reading Like a Historian lesson in Ethiopian schools, it is crucial to provide detailed specifications and contextualization tailored to local educational settings to stimulate teachers to critically rethink their pedagogical strategies and the organization of their teaching practices.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The study aims to design, develop, and test the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) strategy as an intervention to bridge the gap between curriculum intent and classroom realities in Ethiopian secondary history education. To align history education with Ethiopia's curricular goals, prioritizing critical analysis, historical empathy, and Multiperspectivity over memorization. In the current study, I outline the following specific objectives:

- To investigate history teachers' epistemological beliefs about the purpose of teaching history as a prerequisite and how these beliefs influence the development of historical thinking concepts in their classrooms.
- To determine the extent to which substantive and historical thinking concepts have embedded in the current history textbooks in connection to specific learning outcomes, teaching methodologies, and student learning activities.

- To examine history teachers' professional development in historical thinking skills and source analysis.
- To investigate how *Reading Like a Historian (RLH)* strategies can enhance teachers' pedagogical practices in resource-constrained contexts by fostering critical inquiry, improving instructional adaptability, and leveraging locally relevant materials
- To assess the effects of RLH instruction on history teachers' pedagogical practices and students' motivation and engagement.

1.4. Research Questions

To achieve the above stated objective the following research questions are formulated:

- What epistemic stance do history teachers have held toward teaching disciplinary history in schools?
- What kinds of substantive and procedural concepts of historical knowledge are embedded in Grade-10 Secondary schools History Textbooks?
- What are the conceptions of history teachers towards the purpose of teaching school history and knowledge of the historical thinking practice in their classrooms?
- How can RLH enhance pedagogical practices in resource-constrained contexts?
- What are the effects of explicit teaching of the Reading Like a Historian strategies on the history teachers instructional practice and Students motivation and engagement?

1.5. The Significance of the Study

This study held academic significance with the potential to inspire educational stakeholders to better understand the integration of the Reading Like a Historian method in secondary school history classrooms. Primarily, the findings can help students and teachers directly refine their learning and teaching practices. Teachers can adapt their lesson plans to integrate the development of Reading Like a Historian, such as posing guiding questions, facilitating discussions on multiple perspectives, and engaging students in problem-solving activities. This empowers students to approach history critically and contextually, making the subject more relevant and engaging.

The study is significant because it holistically addresses the needs of teachers, students, researchers, policymakers, and teacher training institutions, aiming to transform history education into a more dynamic, relevant, and impactful discipline. More specifically, the outcomes of the study have significant implications for a range of educational stakeholders, as outlined below. Curriculum developers can utilize the findings to reassess and redefine history textbook learning activities, ensuring that they foster the development of historical thinking concepts such as chronological reasoning, critical analysis, and source evaluation. The study may also guide the Education Bureau, at local, regional, and national levels allocating resources to create enabling conditions for teaching history, such as providing updated teaching materials, professional development for teachers, and access to technology and archives.

This would ensure that the curriculum core competencies by equipping students with both substantive historical knowledge and the skills necessary for collaborative learning, critical engagement with the past, engaging in meaningful exploratory, investigative, and inquisitive activities by learners who take increasingly growing ownership for their learning (MoE, 2020). Institutes of higher education responsible for training secondary school history teachers to leverage the research findings to revise the curriculum of their teacher education programs for history as a specialized discipline orienting pre-service and in-service teachers to disciplinary knowledge of history. This includes establishing criteria for determining historical significance —a critical yet underexplored area in Ethiopian historiography, historical studies and history education. The criteria for what makes an event, figure, or phenomenon historically significant often vary depending on the perspectives and goals of different communities involved in interpreting history. This lack of consensus complicates efforts to teach and assess the concept effectively in educational settings. Enhancing procedural knowledge, such as techniques for analyzing primary and secondary sources, engaging students in historical inquiry, and facilitating critical discussions. By aligning teacher-training programs with contemporary approaches to historical education, these institutes can better prepare educators to implement effective, inquiry-based methods in their classrooms.

It can serve as springboard for other researchers who are interested to do research on designing alternative and constructivist assessment for history education. Research on how history teachers

engage students in interpretation and analysis, working with historical evidences, and research on students' epistemic beliefs toward learning history and the purpose of school history, how to make history relevant for student teachers' in higher institutions major in history education.

1.6. Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the implementation of the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) strategy in Ethiopian secondary schools to enhance the teaching of historical content knowledge and historical thinking skills. The research had conducted within the context of Ethiopia's recent curriculum reforms, which emphasize competency-based education and the development of 21st-century skills. The study targets Grade 10 history classrooms in two secondary schools in Shambu Town, involving 134 students and their history teachers.

The intervention lasts for seven weeks and includes 14 class sessions centered on the theme: "Social, Economic, and Political Developments in Ethiopia from the mid-19th century to 1941". The study investigating how history teachers' views on the nature of historical knowledge influence their instructional practices. Evaluating the extent to which Grade 10 history textbooks incorporate substantive and procedural historical concepts aligned with the RLH approach. Assessing history teachers' training and readiness to implement historical thinking strategies in their classrooms. Developing and testing RLH-based lesson plans to foster students' critical engagement with historical sources. Measuring the effects of the RLH intervention on teachers' pedagogical practices and students' motivation, engagement, and historical thinking skills.

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection methods such as interviews, surveys, classroom observations, and pre- and post-tests. The results are intended to enhance history education in Ethiopia by offering practical insights and flexible design principles for the incorporation of RLH strategies into the curriculum by offering practical insights and adaptable design principles for integrating RLH strategies into the curriculum.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

The study is confined to two secondary schools in Shambu Town, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions or schools with different demographics and resources. The small sample size of 134 students and a limited number of teachers (16 participants in the preliminary phase and 2 in the intervention) may not fully represent the diversity of Ethiopian secondary school contexts. The seven-week intervention period may be insufficient to observe long-term changes in students' historical thinking skills or teachers' instructional practices. A longer duration could provide a robust data on the sustainability of the RLH approach.

The study highlights the scarcity of primary and secondary historical sources in Ethiopian schools, which poses challenges for implementing RLH strategies effectively. Teachers' reliance on textbooks as the primary resource may restrict the depth of historical inquiry. Limited access to technology and digital resources further constrains the ability to diversify teaching materials. The study's reliance on self-reported data (e.g., teacher surveys and interviews) may introduce biases, such as social desirability bias, where participants provide responses they believe be expected rather than their true perspectives. The absence of a control group in the intervention design makes it difficult to attribute changes solely to the RLH strategy, as other external factors may influence the outcomes.

The findings indicate that many history teachers lack adequate training in historical thinking concepts, which may hinder the effective implementation of the RLH approach. The four-day training workshop, while intensive, may not be sufficient to fully equip teachers with the necessary skills and confidence to adopt new pedagogical methods. The study identifies a misalignment between the Ethiopian curriculum's emphasis on competency-based learning and the predominance of lower-order thinking skills in textbooks and assessments. This disconnect may limit the impact of the RLH intervention on students' higher-order thinking abilities. The study acknowledges the influence of Ethiopia's socio-political context on history education, including the dominance of state-approved narratives and the marginalization of alternative perspectives. These factors may affect teachers' willingness or ability to adopt critical and

inquiry-based approaches like RLH. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities of integrating RLH strategies into Ethiopian secondary schools. The findings can serve as a foundation for future research and policy initiatives aimed at enhancing history education in Ethiopia and similar contexts.

1.8. Operational definitions of Terms

The following definitions provide consistent understanding of terms used throughout the study:

Close Reading

Close Reading is a vital strategy that enables students to analyze language, tone, structure, and other textual elements to uncover deeper meanings and implications within historical documents.

Contextualization

Contextualization is a crucial skill in examining the time period, social conditions, political climate, and cultural factors that influenced the creation of a historical document.

Corroboration

Corroboration is an essential skill for historians and students engaged in historical inquiry. By comparing evidence from different documents, individuals can assess reliability and construct informed interpretations that reflect a deeper understanding of past events.

Disciplinary Knowledge

Disciplinary knowledge in the field of history refers to an understanding of how historians investigate the past and construct historical claims, arguments, and accounts. This concept aligns with the definition provided by Hynd et al. (2004), emphasizing that individuals with high levels of disciplinary knowledge are adept at recognizing how knowledge is created and reported within the discipline of history.

Epistemological Belief

Epistemological belief refers to an individual's underlying assumptions and conceptions about the nature of historical knowledge — how it is constructed; its certainty, and how it should be justified or interpreted. For the purposes of this study, epistemological belief has understood as how both teachers and students perceive historical facts, sources, and narratives directly shaping teaching practices and students' approaches to learning history (Stoel et al., 2022).

Historical Knowledge

Historical knowledge is the study of human experiences, societal structures, movements, and cultural transformations, contributing to other disciplinary subjects by analyzing events, trends, and societal developments in real-world contexts (Bhat et al., 2023).

Historical Thinking

Historical thinking refers to "our mental toolkit for engaging critically with the multiple stories of the past we encounter in our daily life" (Lévesque, 2016). Historical Thinking is a set of organizing concepts of evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, perspectives, empathy and contestability as integral to the development of historical understanding and to construct a meaningful account of the past (Seixas, 2006; Gilbert, Tudball, & Brett, 2019; Seixas & Morton, 2013).

History Education

History education encompasses substantive knowledge (refers to the subject matter of history) and disciplinary knowledge (understanding how historians construct knowledge, including methods of inquiry, analysis, and interpretation of sources) (Seixas, 1999).

Perceptions

Perceptions is used in this research to encompass a complex interplay of epistemic beliefs, conceptions, and views held by teachers and students regarding the roles of subjectivity, objectivity, and interpretation in constructing historical knowledge (Stoel et al., 2017).

Reading Like a Historian (RLH)

Reading Like a Historian (RLH) is an instructional strategy that bridges substantive and disciplinary dimensions of history education by developing students' historical thinking skills through the examination of primary and secondary sources. It features a curriculum centered on compelling historical questions and engages students in key disciplinary practices such as sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, and close reading to construct evidence-based interpretations of the past. [Sources: https://inquirygroup.org/historylessons; https://knilt.arcc.albany.edu/Reading_Like_A_Historian]

Sourcing

Sourcing involves evaluating the credibility of a document by considering its origin, including the author's perspective, purpose, and context. Students learn to ask questions such as who created the document, when it was created, and for what purpose.

Student Engagement

Student Engagement refers to actively involving in classroom activities, find learning enjoyable, and are more likely to participate in discussions, complete assignments, and pursue deeper understanding beyond memorization (Awang, 2023).

Student Motivation

Student Motivation in history education refers to the internal and external factors that drive students to engage in activities that are purposeful, relevant, inquiry stimulating, action-oriented, reflective, and enjoyable. This motivation can be intrinsic, stemming from a genuine interest in historical topics, curiosity, and the satisfaction of understanding the past for its own sake, or extrinsic, influenced by external rewards such as grades, praise, or recognition (Awang, 2023).

Teaching

Teaching is a purposeful and transformative process designed to nurture every learner's knowledge, attitudes, and skills essential for personal and societal advancement. It fosters holistic growth through constructivist pedagogy, where students activate prior knowledge and co-construct understanding via exploration, interaction, and reflection. Central to this process is cultivating positive teacher-student relationships grounded in mutual respect and collaboration, working together for the common good (MoE, 2020).

Teaching Practices

Teaching Practices in this context are rooted in the application of substantive and procedural knowledge through the "Reading Like a Historian" approach as a foundation for classroom instruction.

Thinking Skill

Thinking Skill refers to the set of cognitive processes and analytical abilities that enable students to analyze, interpret, and evaluate historical information rather than simply memorizing facts or events to construct historical knowledge. These skills, often called historical thinking skills, help students approach history as historians do—by questioning sources, considering context, and constructing evidence-based interpretations.

1.9. Organization of the Study

The study is systematically organized into six chapters that present the research from introduction to conclusion. This systematically organization begin with contextual analysis and problem identification (Ch. 1), through theoretical grounding (Ch. 2), intervention design and methodology (Ch. 3), empirical results (Ch. 4), interpretive discussion (Ch. 5), and practical recommendations and conclusions (Ch. 6). Each chapter builds thematically on the previous, providing a coherent narrative that addresses both the challenges and opportunities in transforming history education in Ethiopia through the Reading Like a Historian strategy.

Chapter 1 establishes the foundational context of the study, focusing on Ethiopian historiography and educational frameworks. The chapter begins by acknowledging the global importance of history education as a critical lens through which to understand contemporary society and anticipate future developments. It then narrows to discuss the expansion of international scholarship on history teaching over the past three decades, emphasizing the growing recognition of historical thinking concepts in secondary education.

The chapter details how Ethiopian historiography has been significantly influenced by political agendas aimed at nation building since the 1960s. It examines how historical narratives have aligned with ruling political ideologies, often glorifying dynastic successes while marginalizing alternative perspectives1. This section traces the evolution of Ethiopian historiography, including the significant shift in the 1970s that began challenging dominant narratives. The chapter contrasts the global shift away from rote memorization toward fostering historical thinking concepts with Ethiopia's continued reliance on traditional teaching methods. It notes that the Ministry of Education has recognized significant shortcomings in the current educational system, particularly criticizing its focus on “memorization and content mastery” rather than promoting active engagement and critical analysis

This chapter contextualizes the need to reform history education in Ethiopia, shifting from rote memorization to fostering critical thinking through the *Reading Like a Historian (RLH)* strategy. It outlines the problem of outdated pedagogical practices, gaps in curriculum implementation,

and the study's objectives to design and evaluate RLH-based interventions. Research questions focus on teachers' epistemic beliefs, curriculum alignment, teacher preparation, RLH application, and its impact on instruction and student motivation.

Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive review of literature relevant to historical thinking pedagogy and the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) approach. While specific details from this chapter aren't provided in the search results, the abstract suggests this section likely examines research on historical thinking concepts, their implementation in educational settings, and the theoretical underpinnings of the RLH methodology. The chapter presumably explores works by influential scholars in the field such as Sam Wineburg, whose 2001 book "Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts" has mentioned as "pivotal in transforming the teaching and learning of history". The review synthesizes global scholarship on historical thinking, constructivism, and active learning methods. It highlights models like Wineburg's RLH and Seixas' "Big Six" concepts, contrasting them with traditional approaches. The chapter identifies gaps in African contexts and emphasizes the potential of RLH to bridge theory and practice, fostering analytical skills and student engagement.

Chapter 3 outlines the methodological framework employed in the study. Based on information from the abstract, this chapter details the Design-Based Research (DBR) approach used for the intervention. Phase one (Context Analysis): examines teachers' epistemic beliefs (naïve realism vs. criterialist stances) and curriculum materials. Findings reveal reliance on textbooks, limited procedural knowledge, and minimal integration of historical inquiry. Phase two (Design): develops RLH lesson plans and teacher training modules, emphasizing collaborative design principles, sourcing, and evidence-based argumentation. Phase three (Evaluation): assesses RLH's impact through pre/post-tests and classroom observations, showing improved student engagement and critical analysis. Challenges include time constraints and teachers' adaptation to new methods. The intervention phase involves:

1. A seven-week intervention period in two secondary schools in Shambu Town
2. Implementation across 14 class meetings, each lasting 40 minutes
3. A target population of 134 students from two sections of 10th-grade classrooms

4. A specially designed unit focused on “Social, Economic, and Political Developments in Ethiopia from the mid-19th century to 1941”

The study adopts a *Design-Based Research (DBR)* framework, blending pragmatism and mixed methods. It details data collection tools (interviews, questionnaires, and observations), ethical considerations, and the selection of secondary schools in Shambu Town. The iterative DBR process—context analysis, intervention design, evaluation, and dissemination—is justified for addressing real-world educational challenges. This chapter likely describes data collection instruments, including questionnaires and interview protocols referenced in the appendices, as well as the scoring rubrics for analyzing Reading Like a Historian skills.

Chapter 4 presents the findings from the intervention. Although specific details of this chapter are not provided in the search results, it presumably contains analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data collected during the implementation of the RLH approach. This chapter presents findings on how the RLH intervention affected student motivation, engagement, and historical thinking skills. It reports improvements in critical analysis, source evaluation, and evidence-based argumentation. The results highlight changes in teachers’ instructional methods, with a shift toward more inquiry-based and student-centered approaches.

Chapter 5 provides a critical interpretation of the research findings in relation to the theoretical framework and existing literature. Based on the abstract, this chapter discusses how the Reading Like Historians (RLH) intervention demonstrated. This chapter situates the results within the broader literature, discussing how the RLH strategy addresses the identified problems in Ethiopian history education. It explores the implications for curriculum reform, teacher professional development, and the potential for scaling the approach to other contexts. Positive impact on student motivation, success in addressing misconceptions about history, enhanced engagement through diverse texts and transformation of teachers' instructional practices. The discussion also acknowledges the study's limitations, such as the duration of the intervention and contextual constraints. The chapter likely explores the structured lesson framework of the RLH intervention, and proposes the following design principles (e.g., using multiple sources, fostering discussions) and curricular reforms to institutionalize RLH in Ethiopia. which includes:

- Asking guiding questions
- Activating students' background knowledge
- Connecting with historical sources
- Applying Reading Like a Historian strategies
- Facilitating whole-class discussion
- Developing evidence-based historical argumentation and writing

Chapter 6 provides a concise summary of the study's findings and implications. While specific details are not provided in the search results, this chapter likely synthesizes the key outcomes of the research, acknowledges limitations, and offers recommendations for curriculum development based on the promising results of the RLH intervention. The chapter presumably reinforces the dissertation's core argument that transforming historical content into historical questions to be investigated engages students in historical thinking and develops the "analytical, critical, creative and problem-solving skills required in the curriculum framework". The final chapter summarizes the study's contributions to improving history education through the RLH strategy, emphasizing the development of historical thinking and metacognitive skills.

- **Policy and Practice Recommendations:** It offers actionable recommendations for policymakers, curriculum developers, and educators, advocating for the integration of inquiry-based methods and continuous professional development.
- **Future Research:** The chapter suggests directions for further research, such as longer-term studies and adaptations for different educational settings

In conclusion, the study progresses from identifying systemic gaps in Ethiopian history education to designing, testing, and refining an evidence-based intervention. Thematic coherence is maintained through iterative DBR phases, grounded in theoretical frameworks and empirical data, culminating in actionable recommendations for educational stakeholders. The study's organization moves logically from contextualizing the issues in Ethiopian history education through a systematic implementation of an intervention, to analysis and discussion of findings that suggest "a promising direction for future curriculum development in this field".

The study effectively addresses both the theoretical foundations of historical thinking and the practical challenges of implementing new pedagogical approaches in the Ethiopian educational context. Its organization reflects the rigorous academic standards expected of doctoral research while maintaining a focus on practical educational improvements.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews related literature pertinent to the topic understudy. It aimed at investigating relevant previous research work related to the teaching and development of historical thinking concepts, active teaching methodologies, and constructivist approach in history education theorizing how these approaches utilized for making history meaningful for both teachers and students in classroom contexts. This process involves identifying key themes, trends, and gaps in the existing literature. Consequently, the synthesis of the literature extends beyond empirical findings to encompass pedagogical, theoretical, conceptual, and methodological insights.

2.2. The Concepts of Historical Thinking

The main purpose of looking for relevant literature using literature methods from various sources are to present the theoretical evidence for the designing and delivery of instructional materials and to provide a practical framework for implementing those theories in the history classroom. Based on an understanding of how students learn history in the classroom and to answer the above-mentioned research questions the researcher prefers to use historical and educational theory specifically constructivist learning theory and historical thinking theory as a lens for situating theoretical and conceptual frameworks (Van Straaten et al., 2016).

The rise of social constructivism in social studies signifies a break from traditional positivist approaches, which prioritized objective truth and universal laws akin to those found in the natural sciences. This traditional perspective often presumed an external reality that could be discovered through rigorous methodology and empirical observation as noted by Doolittle and Hicks (2003). Constructivism fundamentally redefines our understanding of knowledge and truth, emphasizing the subjective nature of these concepts. This epistemological framework asserts that individual experiences, cultural contexts, and historical backgrounds significantly shape what we perceive as "truth" (*ibid*, p. 77). This shift from traditional positivist approaches, which prioritized a singular objective truth, towards constructivism represents a significant departure in how we conceive of the nature of knowledge and learning.

Embracing constructivist principles in educational contexts emphasizes active participation, critical thinking, and collaboration, aligning with the understanding that learning is a dynamic process deeply rooted in context and perspective. This approach transforms traditional educational paradigms by fostering an environment where students are engaged, reflective, and collaborative learners. Constructivism is widely recognized as a preferred teaching framework in education, particularly because it emphasizes the active role of students in constructing knowledge. This approach not only guides educators in selecting appropriate learning activities but also aligns well with the principles of historical thinking (Epstein, & Salinas, 2018).

In the field of history education, various scholars have employed different terms to describe a related set of concepts and skills that encompass how individuals engage with and understand history. These terms include "historical skills," "historical thinking concepts," "historical understanding," "historical reading," "historical literacy," "historical consciousness," and "historical reasoning." Each term reflects nuanced aspects of how students interact with historical content and develop their analytical capabilities (Parkes, & Donnelly, 2014; Seixas, 2017; Lévesque, & Clark, 2018; Drie, & Boxtel, 2008; Lee, 1983).

In this study, the researcher opts to use "historical thinking concepts" as a pervasive term that encompasses a variety of approaches and methods for “doing history” (Parkes, & Donnelly, 2014; Nokes, 2022; Thorp, & Persson, 2020). The definition provided by Monte-Sano and Budano (2013) encapsulates the multifaceted nature of historical thinking, emphasizing its interpretive and analytical dimensions. Historical thinking involves not just understanding events, but critically engaging with the broader context, sources, and interpretations to develop well-reasoned, evidence-based arguments.

The assertion that teaching students to "read and write like historians" enhances their ability to learn history and think historically aligns with the core goals of history education is supported by a wealth of educational research and practice (Nokes, 2017; Reisman, 2012; Monte-Sano, 2011; Paz, & Felton, 2010; De La Paz et al., 2014). They highlighted that engaging with history through this lens requires students to analyze primary, and secondary sources, identify bias, corroborate evidence, and construct reasoned arguments. This approach equips students not only

with the tools to understand the past but also with transferable skills essential for civic participation and navigating a rapidly evolving world.

Research into instructional methods for teaching students to read like historians has gained significant traction, particularly through the work of influential scholars such as Peter Seixas, Tom Morton, and Sam Wineburg. These researchers have developed models that emphasize the cognitive processes involved in historical thinking, aiming to replicate the analytical practices of professional historians in educational settings (Seixas, & Morton, 2013; Seixas, 2017; Wineburg, 1991, 2010; Drie, & Boxtel, 2008).

Sam Wineburg has made significant contributions to the field of history education over the past two decades, particularly through his leadership of the Stanford History Education Group (SHEG the development of programs like *Reading Like a Historian* have introduced a pedagogical shift from rote memorization of facts to engaging students in the processes of historical inquiry. He has identified critical heuristics, which includes *sourcing*: Evaluating the origin and context of documents. *Close Reading*: Analyzing text for deeper meaning. *Contextualization*: Placing events within their broader historical framework. *Corroboration*: Comparing multiple sources to establish reliability and accuracy. Wineburg's findings suggest that while historians engage in these complex processes, many students tend to simplify their approach, often accepting information at face value without critical analysis (Wineburg, 1991).

Peter Seixas and Tom Morton have articulated a model of historical thinking that encompasses six key concepts. Seixas and Morton root their pedagogical approach in the “Big Six” principles and explain how each concept can be applied in the classroom. Each chapter begins with an essay that explores one of the six concepts through the work of a Canadian historian, followed by a discussion of four or five “guideposts” (Seixas, & Morton, 2012, pp. 10-11).

- **Historical significance**: *From the entire human past, what is worth learning about*?
- **Evidence**: *How do we know what we know about the past?*
- **Continuity and change**: *How can we make sense of the complex flows of history?*
- **Cause and consequence**: *Why do events happen, and what are their impacts?*

- **Historical perspective:** *How can we better understand the people of the past?*
- **The ethical dimension**: *How can history help us to live in the present?*

Their model emphasizes that historical thinking is not just about memorizing facts but involves engaging with complex problems that historians face when interpreting the past. Seixas warns against these concepts or ideas equated with history and argues that they should instead regarded as representing problems historians encounter and 'history takes shape from efforts to work with these problems' (Seixas, 2017, p. 597).

The model developed by Van Boxtel and Van Drie (2008) builds on existing literature and incorporates an analysis of students' reasoning in history. Their framework highlights the interaction between procedural skills (like sourcing and corroboration) and conceptual understanding (such as significance and context). This dual focus aims to foster a more nuanced understanding of history among students, encouraging them to engage with historical texts critically.

By teaching these skills, teachers are not only becoming experts in their field, but they are also preparing students to think holistically about human culture. Levesque argues that "Students who develop historical thinking concepts are better able to question the value of historical narratives, examine their preconceived historical ideas and sense of belonging, and ultimately generate their own stories of the past based on scholarly rules of argument" (Levesque, 2016, p. 89).

Historical thinking concepts are essential for students as they enable them to critically evaluate historical narratives, challenge their preconceived notions, and construct their own informed interpretations of the past. This skill set is crucial for fostering a deeper understanding of history and its relevance to contemporary issues. However, educators must also address the challenges students face in adapting to historical discourse and the emotional impact of historical texts (Hynd et al., 2004; Nokes et al., 2007; Keirn, & Luhr, 2012; Levesque, 2016).

Furthermore, Reisman (2012, p. 106) argues for the need to fine-tune historical thinking measures to reflect changes in students' epistemology, advocating for classroom-ready materials that support explicit instruction in discipline-specific strategies. He continued arguing, if

teaching historical thinking concepts are fine-tuned, it helps to "capture changes in students' epistemology…rather than sending teachers on field trips to historical archives," suggesting that classroom instruction might be best supported by classroom-ready materials.

2.3. The Challenges of Teaching Historical Thinking Concepts

Teaching historical thinking, while transformative, presents its own set of challenges. Robert Bain has extensively discussed these difficulties, highlighting several key issues that teachers face daily. To begin with, Bain highlights the tension between fostering historical thinking concepts and addressing the expansive content of history courses, as history is a vast and ever-expanding field filled with complex information about people and events, which can overwhelm students. He argues that teaching history cannot simply be reduced to a choice between memorizing facts and mastering historical thinking processes. Instead, educators must find ways to integrate both aspects effectively, encouraging students to engage deeply with the content while also developing critical analytical skills.

Bain (2005) highlights the significant challenges that high school history teachers face, particularly in large classes with predefined course goals and the reliance on textbooks. The vastness of historical content presents a complex learning environment for students, who must navigate an array of unfamiliar names, dates, events, and narratives. This complexity makes it difficult to choose between memorizing facts and mastering historical thinking processes. Bain argues that fostering historical thinking is essential for effective history education, as it enhances students' engagement with the content and helps them develop critical analytical skills.

According to Greene (1994), students face several challenges in learning to think like historians, including cognitive demands, misalignments in task interpretation, and the need for specialized argumentation skills. Effective instructional strategies, such as using separate sources and focusing on argumentative writing, can help students better understand and engage with historical material. Addressing these challenges is essential for fostering historical thinking and preparing students for informed civic engagement (Greene, 1994).

Sam Wineburg (2001) assertion that historical thinking is often an "unnatural" act underscores the complexity of teaching history effectively. This perspective highlights the necessity for teachers to guide students in transcending their familiar assumptions and worldviews, which can impede their ability to engage with historical content critically. Historical thinking requires both substantial knowledge and skill from teachers, enabling them to help students learn historical content while simultaneously developing their capacities to use evidence, assess interpretations, and analyze change over time.

Peter Seixas (1998) explores how student teachers face challenges in developing historical thinking concepts, particularly in using primary sources, constructing historical narratives, and understanding historical relevance. The article discusses the implications for teacher education programs, suggesting that future educators must be equipped with the skills to foster historical thinking in their students. This includes developing their own understanding of history and the methods used to teach it.

2.4. Constructivism in the History Classroom

The Ethiopian "General Curriculum Framework" (2020, p. 15) aligns with the principles of *social constructivism*, which posits that cooperative and collaborative learning play vital roles in developing critical thinking, active learning, and problem-solving skills among students. A social constructivist curriculum in secondary schools emphasizes collaborative learning, critical thinking, and the social construction of knowledge. This approach has significant implications for teacher education, content selection, and the preparation of support materials, particularly in social science and technical subjects.

The shift in Ethiopia's educational philosophy underscores the necessity of adopting a teaching and learning philosophy that emphasizes both individual learner development and the cultivation of a democratic community within classrooms and schools. This dual focus aims to create an educational environment that values each student while fostering collaborative and participatory practices (MoE, 2020, p.16).

Windschitl (2002, p. 137) outlines eight key features that characterize teacher and student activity within a constructivist classroom, emphasizing how these elements optimize meaningful learning experiences. Constructivist teaching is grounded in principles that emphasize active learning, student agency, and the co-construction of knowledge, which stand in contrast to more teacher-directed, standardized approaches. These features are derived from the broader literature on constructivism and focus on enhancing understanding of how people learn. Here are the main points:

- *Eliciting Students' Ideas*: teachers actively engage students by eliciting their ideas and experiences related to key topics, creating learning situations that help them elaborate or restructure their existing knowledge.
- *Engaging in Problem-Based Activities*: Students are provided with frequent opportunities to participate in complex, meaningful, problem-based activities that challenge their thinking.
- *Providing Resources and Tools*: Teachers offer a variety of information resources and necessary tools (both technological and conceptual) to facilitate learning.
- *Collaborative Work and Dialogue*: Students work collaboratively, receiving support to engage in task-oriented dialogue with one another, fostering a community of learners.
- *Explicit Thinking Processes*: Students work collaboratively, receiving support to engage in task-oriented dialogue with one another, fostering a community of learners.
- *Application in Contexts*: Students are regularly asked to apply their knowledge in diverse and authentic contexts, explaining ideas, interpreting texts, predicting phenomena, and constructing arguments based on evidence instead of solely focusing on acquiring predetermined "right answers."
- *Encouraging Reflective and Autonomous Thinking*: Teachers promote students' reflective and autonomous thinking alongside the aforementioned conditions.
- *Using Diverse Assessment Strategies*: Teachers utilize various assessment strategies to monitor the evolution of students' ideas and provide feedback on both the processes and products of their thinking. Assessment aimed at improving students' learning and teachers' teaching has to be viewed as an ongoing process of "gathering, analyzing,

interpreting and sharing information" that provides evidence of students' progress and achievements, and adjusting teaching accordingly (MoE, 2020, p.69).

These features collectively contribute to a classroom environment that supports active engagement and deep understanding, aligning with constructivist principles of education. The question is, is that constructivist pedagogy applicable in the history classroom? If so, how? Yes, constructivist pedagogy is highly applicable in the history classroom, particularly through the integration of inquiry-based approaches. Constructivist approach advocates for a shift in how history is taught, emphasizing the need for students to engage actively with historical sources to develop critical thinking skills essential for understanding the complexities of the past (Van Straaten et al, 2016; Parkes, & Donnelly, 2014; VanSledright, 2004). These studies suggest that applying constructivist approaches in teaching history enhances students' critical thinking, engagement, and overall attitude towards the subject.

From a constructivist perspective, history is a mental construction because the past is gone and not directly accessible, historical accounts are reconstructed by drawing together evidences derived from traces, sources, artifacts, and accounts and attempting to make sense of them typically in the form of an explanatory narrative through applying historical thinking procedural knowledge (Mathis, & Parkes, 2020).

To teach historical thinking procedural knowledge, the first approach is teachers come with a prepared list of questions in relation to learning competencies' students are expected to develop across the unit. Most important of these questions transform the act of reading from passive reception to an engaged and passionate interrogation by introducing students to several subject specific strategies for reading historical documents such as sourcing, contextualization, close reading, corroborating using background knowledge (Wineburg, 2010). This study suggests that achieving the goal of reading and thinking like a historian requires students to engage in critical thinking strategies such as sourcing, corroboration, contextualization, and evaluating multiple texts.

Maggioni and Parkinson's (2008) exploration of the relationship between personal epistemology (a teacher's beliefs about the nature of knowledge and learning) and teaching practice offers valuable insights into pedagogical approaches, particularly in disciplines like history. They found two contrasting views on knowledge: traditional classroom teachers who favored regulated procedures and did not allow students to ask questions, and constructivist teachers who shared authority, promoted constructive interactions, and focused on meaningful questions.

The use of constructivist instructional strategies in history education has gained strong support among scholars, emphasizing the importance of engaging students in active learning processes that deepen their historical understanding. These strategies include articulated instruction, cooperative and collaborative learning, experiential learning, debate, inquiry/problem-based learning, and project-based learning (Bain, 2009; Van Straaten et al., 2016).

2.5. In Search of Active Teaching and Learning Methods in History Education

In Ethiopian General Education Curriculum Framework, learners who take increasingly growing ownership for their learning define "learning as a process of change resulting from engagement in meaningful exploratory, investigative, and inquisitive activities" (MoE, 2020, p. 5). Historical research has also found a significant shift in history education, emphasizing pedagogical practices that foster active learning through historical inquiry (Bain, 2009, p. 160).

In these few decades, the rich and expanding scholarship of history teaching, learning, and cognition has done much to surface and promote the development of historical thinking concepts amongst students in secondary, and even elementary, schools. The movement towards historical thinking from the 1970s to the 2020s has significantly transformed history education, particularly in countries like England, the Netherlands, Canada, and the United States. This evolution reflects a shift from traditional rote learning to a more inquiry-based approach that emphasizes critical engagement with historical narratives (Lévesque, & Clark, 2018; Thorp, & Persson, 2020).

Gómez-Carrasco and his colleagues (2022) provides a comprehensive examination of the evolution of history education research over nearly two decades (2000 – 2019) employing

bibliometric techniques to analyze academic output published in the Web of Science focusing on the conceptual, intellectual, and social structures of the knowledge domain of history education. This study highlights the importance of *Historical Thinking* and *Historical Consciousness* as key areas of research, paving the way for deeper understanding and engagement in history education. By elaborating *Historical Thinking* is emphasizing on the analysis of evidence, reasoning, interpretation, and argumentation. *Historical consciousness* is related to the social functions of history, including identity, memory, popular culture, media representations, and the *uses of the past* (Gómez-Carrasco et al. 2022, p. 506).

Empirical studies assessed by Mark Smith, Joel Breakstone, and Sam Wineburg (2018), have shown that in recent decades, many scholars in North America and Europe have developed historical thinking curricula and curricular frameworks. Myriad state standards also include aspects of historical thinking.

The movement towards historical thinking indeed transformed how history has taught and understood in North America and Western Europe. However, there is still a significant gap in the empirical and practical knowledge in African educational contexts. This gap raises important questions about the methodologies and pedagogical practices employed in teaching history across the continent (Levstik, & Barton, 2004; Boadu, 2020).

Boadu (2020) argues that the evolution of African education—from pre-colonial systems through colonial policies to post-colonial reforms and legislation—has emphasized substantive knowledge over disciplinary concepts in shaping history curricula. This approach prioritizes the transmission of cultural, societal, and historical narratives, often sidelining the methodological and conceptual frameworks integral to the discipline of history.

Currently, the Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2018, p. 35) implicitly advocates the importance of integrating an "inconclusive" curriculum in history education, which presents multiple and often contrasting perspectives on historical events. This approach acknowledges that history is not a single narrative but rather a complex tapestry woven from diverse experiences and interpretations. Ethiopia is and has always been a multicultural nation, home to

over 80 distinct ethnic groups, each with its own linguistic, cultural, and religious identities. However, this rich diversity is often underrepresented in the country's history education. This dissertation aims to explore the national core curriculum materials, school history textbooks, and teachers' perspectives and practices in the classroom by providing discussions on which historical knowledge should students' worth to learn for understanding Ethiopian diversity.

Following the 1991 political changes, Ethiopia adopted a federal system that recognized ethnic diversity through constitutional provisions. Article 39 of the 1995 Constitution granted nations and nationalities the right to preserve their languages and cultures, marking a shift towards a more inclusive educational framework (Kibret, 2019). Despite Ethiopia's multicultural identity, the representation of diverse ethnic histories in educational materials remains limited. The existing curricula often prioritize dominant narratives that overlook or simplify the complexities of Ethiopia's multifaceted society. This lack of representation can lead to a homogenized understanding of history that fails to engage students from various backgrounds (Margo, 2014; Belay, 2016). As explicitly mentioned in the roadmap, the "inconclusive" curriculum reinforces the idea that understanding history is not about memorizing facts but about learning to think critically and extract insights that are relevant to our shared future. As students come to recognize the complexities of historical narratives, they are better prepared to appreciate the diversity of interpretations in all disciplines, whether literature, science, or social studies. This reflective approach helps students see knowledge as dynamic, fostering the kind of critical, open-minded thinking that is vital for constructive citizenship in a diverse society.

Teachers play a crucial role in shaping how history is taught in classrooms. Their epistemological beliefs about the purpose of teaching history significantly influence their instructional practices. Many teachers may not feel equipped to address multicultural issues effectively due to inadequate training or resources, leading to a reliance on traditional methods that do not foster critical engagement with diverse historical perspectives (Margo, 2014). Research on history teaching and learning clearly reflects that there is a substantial relationship between teachers' ability to think historically and the development of their students' historical understanding (Virta, 2002; Sandwell, & von Heyking, 2014; Yeager, & Davis 1995). The obvious and critical question is whether secondary school history teachers understand the

"knowing how" of history. If teachers take up the "doing" of history, they may help their students revitalize historical knowledge to incorporate the "knowing how" (Yeager, & Davis, 1995, p. 20).

Furthermore, a teacher is one of the most important pillars of any educational program. The quality of education has largely been influenced by the quality of its teachers (McKinsey, & McKinsey, 2007). To ensure successful and high-quality education in the twenty-first century, teachers must have a strong awareness of both historical content and pedagogical variables that influence students' learning. However, in Ethiopia, inquiry into the nature of teachers' historical thinking, especially in the context of their "know how", there is still a limited study. In the current research as part of a larger dissertation based on design-based research, I have posed and then attempted to answer in order to discover a contextual framework for and frame of references for teaching and theorizing about history and history education see the link, https:Exploring-History-Teachers-Approaches-to-Disciplinary-History-and-lo301cxbo8de248?mode=doc.

Scholars have noted the evolution of terminology in history education, emphasizing several interconnected concepts that enhance understanding and teaching of history. These include: historical literacy, historical thinking, historical consciousness, historical understanding, and historical reasoning are interconnected concepts essential for understanding and teaching history effectively. These terms collectively represent a shift in history education towards a more nuanced understanding of how individuals engage with historical knowledge, moving beyond rote memorization to critical analysis and interpretation (Drie, & Boxtel, 2008; Parkes, & Donnelly, 2014; Lee, 2005; Lévesque, & Clark, 2018; Thorp, & Persson, 2020).

2.5.1. Teaching for Historical Understanding

Research on teaching for historical understanding contends with Piagetian theory of learning on history education; suggest that incorporating narrative theories and psychological frameworks into history instruction can enhance student's historical understanding even at basic level (Levstik, & Pappas, 1992). Teaching for Understanding in history, as described by Booth (2003, pp. 16-19), emphasizes the importance of high-level learning that involves student and teacher representations of the past events and societies in history. This approach focuses on three core

aspects: *(1) Historical understanding as the mental representation of events and societies in the past*, *(2) Historical understanding as the representation of the nature and significance of people's lives in the past,* and *(3) Historical understanding as a facility with disciplinary techniques, procedures and concepts.*

Teaching for historical understanding is an iterative process influenced by prior knowledge, existing conceptions, and the context of learning, and can benefit from incorporating historical evaluation results and narrative theories. In this sense, understanding history is a multifaceted process that requires consideration of learners' prior knowledge, the context of learning, and effective teaching strategies. The above two studies has an implication for history instruction

Cognitive Development: Research suggests that historical understanding is linked to cognitive development theories, which argue against the idea that such understanding is strictly a late adolescent achievement. Instead, it posits that younger students can engage with historical concepts and skills through appropriately designed instructional methods that build on their existing knowledge structures.

Constructivist Approaches: The teaching methodology aligns with constructivist principles, where students actively construct their understanding through inquiry-based learning experiences. This approach encourages students to engage with historical content critically and creatively, fostering a deeper comprehension of the subject matter.

Good practice inspires active learning. Active teaching in history involves integrating disciplinary knowledge, understanding how students learn history in the classroom, and utilizing appropriate resources and activities (Bain, 2005). Based on the aforementioned arguments, the following key questions may be posed for advocates of teaching for historical understanding: What sorts of *disciplinary techniques, procedures and concepts* do history teachers know about their subject matter? About how students learn history in the classroom? About resources and activities in history lessons? - is a helpful way of thinking to provide a valuable perspective as the necessary knowledge in this field.

Husbands et al., (2003, p. 64) explores a variety of strategies in a classroom setting. How teachers' teaching practices had been influenced by various factors, including behavioral challenges, examination demands, and their own views on history. Teachers' commitment to engage their students through various methods, such as structuring lessons, activities, and self-presentation. "Questioning" is critically important for all teachers, serving various purposes, such as lesson starter, engaging learners, reassurance, moving lessons on, recapping knowledge, and enabling the students to think critically.

The exploration of teacher knowledge reveals significant insights into the complexities of teaching, challenging simplistic views that consider teaching merely a technical skill. Effective history teaching requires a multifaceted knowledge base, which includes several critical components: content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of how students learn history in the classroom, knowledge of availability of diverse forms of resourcing for history lessons and the varied types of activities (Borich, 2017).

Furthermore, Wiggins and McTighe (2005) explores key ideas, and highlights the importance of understanding in teaching, stating that it goes beyond content acquisition and involves explaining, interpreting, applying, and transferring learning to new settings and challenges (p. 84). Knowledge is foundational—it includes facts, concepts, and procedures. Therefore, teaching for understanding is all about "digging deeper, continually asking the essential questions, and rethinking (ibid, p. vi).

2.5.2. Teaching Historical Literacy

Historical literacy can be seen as "a systematic process with particular sets of skills, attitudes and conceptual understandings that mediate and develop historical consciousness" (Taylor, & Young, 2003, p. 29). The objective of imparting historical literacy to students is to cultivate critical thinking, democratic decision-making, and a sense of global citizenship, rather than to train them as future historians. The purpose of history education in schools is not vocational; instead, it

seeks to equip students with the ability to embrace complexity, adapt to new circumstances, and to resist the first answer that comes to mind (Wineburg, 2010).

Disciplinary literacy interventions in history improve adolescents' historical reading, thinking, and writing practices through scaffolds, enhancing students factual and interpretive accuracy, persuasiveness of evidence, sources of evidence, corroboration of evidence, and contextualization of evidence (Monte-Sano, 2010; De La Paz et al., 2014; Paz et al., 2017). Disciplinary literacy in history also enhances students' ability to critically engage with historical texts, develop historical reasoning, and integrate literacy practices specific to the discipline (Wineburg, & Reisman, 2015).

According to Downey, & Long, (2015), teaching for historical literacy involves conceptual framework, historical thinking, historical inquiry, historical knowledge, planning instruction, activating prior learning, and applying knowledge. They have proposed a flexible framework for promoting historical literacy in classrooms. In the first place, teachers should be seen as professionals with the freedom to create their own teaching methods, focusing on active engagement and constructing students' understanding of history. They should motivate students, pose challenging questions, and emphasize the relevance of history to their lives. To become historically literate, history should be seen as an inquiry into the past, not just a subject matter to be memorized. This approach encourages historical thinking and allows teachers to do more than just deliver factual knowledge. Historical literacy classroom should be engaged in critical historical analysis and thinking. Teaching for historical literacy has grounded in disciplinary literacy practices and calls on students to bring the full weight of their intellect to the act of reading such as *sourcing*, *contextualization*, and *corroboration* (Wineburg, 1991; Wineburg, & Reisman, 2015).

Maposa, & Wassermann (2009) have articulated a conceptual framework of historical literacy based on several benchmarks, each with its own sub-parts. The first benchmark is historical content knowledge, which includes remembering events and understanding narratives. The second benchmark is conceptual understanding, covering ideas like time, causation, and significance. The third benchmark involves using historical methods, such as sourcing and

analyzing evidence. Historical consciousness connects past, present, and future, forming the fourth benchmark. The final benchmark is understanding historical language, which can be unique and technical (Taylor, & Young, 2003; Maposa, & Wassermann, 2009; Hajisoteriou et al., 2024).

Considering all this, the researcher supports Hajisoteriou et al. 's (2024) definition of historical literacy, stating that it involves individuals being capable of critically studying, justifying, associating, evaluating, synthesizing, and communicating historical information and ideals related to history. However, the major question for consideration is whether historical literacy regarded as a competency in history curriculum remains unresolved in the Ethiopian context.

2.5.3. Teaching Historical Inquiry Strategies

Historical inquiry involves colligation (grouping events and concepts according to shared purposes), historical distance (identifying a separate past from the present), and reconstruction - supplying individual content to general categories (Retz, 2017). In this sense, historical inquiry provides a way to inquire into, organize and explain events that happened in a historical period.

The Ethiopian General Education Curriculum Framework, developed by the Ministry of Education in 2020, emphasizes inquiry-based learning as a core approach of teaching. This approach encourages learners to participate in activities that are *purposeful, relevant, inquiry stimulating, action-oriented, reflective, and enjoyable* (MoE, 2020, p. 17). The framework aims to enhance critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills among students, thereby preparing them for the challenges of the 21st century. Teachers play a crucial role in creating a conducive learning environment, providing care and support necessary for learners to learn through *critical thinking, creativity, inquiry, investigation, experimentation, problem solving, innovation, communication, and collaboration* (MoE, 2020, p. 67).

According to Retz (2017, p. 10), the representation of the past is a “subjective construction” influenced by narrative techniques, cultural contexts, and interpretive frameworks, rather than an objective recounting of historical events. To possess a clear sense of the structure of historical inquiry, incorporating features like colligation, historical distance, and reconstruction, is essential

for justifying and enhancing history education through methods such as document-based lessons, narrative negotiation, historical thinking models, and inquiry-based learning.

Carrasco et al. (2016) suggest that inquiry-based teaching methods, often focused on sciences, can be effective for learning history and other social sciences. These strategies involve planning, organizing, and executing actions based on students' activities, following teacher guidance. Van Boxtel et al. (2021) have also noted that inquiry learning in history education involves students developing or evaluating interpretations of the past through authentic investigations and the analysis of multiple sources, including historical documents, artifacts, and accounts created by historians.

Retz (2017) criticizes history educationalists for promoting a disciplinary model of history education that lacks structure, stating that they aim to introduce students to the discipline but lack a clear understanding of the features inherent in historical inquiry across various specializations and subject matters. Despite the critics of Retz, scholars have proposed a disciplinary model of historical inquiry practices, focusing on three common elements in social studies classrooms: *questions, tasks,* and *sources* as the foundational elements. Teachers use *questions* for various pedagogical purposes, with inquiry-driven teachers using them as the anchor for content, instruction, resource, and assessment decisions. *Tasks* involve students constructing evidence-based arguments to address the overarching question. *Sources* are essential for students to explore the content behind a question and provide support for their arguments, requiring access to a diverse array of source material (Grant, Swan, & Lee, 2022, p. 14). Thus, the inquiry-based approach proposes that students explore the academic content, posing questions, researching and answering them (Carrasco et al., 2016, p. 132). These elements enable teachers and their students to dig deeply into the range of topics that define social studies.

In a constructivist classroom, historical inquiry begins with asking guiding questions, gathering and organizing relevant sources, interpreting and analyzing evidence, evaluating and drawing conclusions, and communicating clearly and logically. This process involves synthesizing evidence, making informed judgments, and using appropriate forms of communication, such as oral, visual, written, and multimedia, to reach different audiences and purposes. Effective use of

historical terminology, citation of sources, and appropriate documentation are also essential components of this approach (Ontario, 2015, pp. 296-297).

Inquiry-based learning is a pedagogical approach that emphasizes the active role of students in their learning process. Borich (2017) outlines a comprehensive cycle of inquiry, which includes identifying problems, brainstorming solutions, formulating questions, investigating issues, analyzing results, discussing findings, reflecting on the process, drawing conclusions, and presenting outcomes. This cycle serves as a foundational model for educators designing inquiry activities to guide students through their learning experiences.

2.5.4. Teaching Historical Thinking Concepts

Recent developments in educational, cultural, and social theories have significantly influenced history education, shifting the focus from mere knowledge reception to a more active construction of knowledge. This transformation is largely inspired by the works of educational theorists such as Jerome Bruner and Paul Hirst, whose ideas have shaped curriculum reforms in Western Europe and North America (Lévesque, & Clark, 2018). One of the results of this transformation in history education is the introduction of historical thinking concepts. Nowadays, those who engage in historical thinking research are confronted with a plethora of references to *historical thinking* concepts (Lévesque, & Clark, 2018, p. 119). This concept has become a "standard" in the theory and practice of history education across the Western world (Keirn, & Martin, 2012).

The scholarship surrounding the teaching of historical thinking has significantly evolved over the past few decades, emphasizing the development of critical skills in students across various educational levels. Influential researchers such as Robert Bain, Keith Barton, Peter Seixas, and Sam Wineburg have contributed to this field, establishing a framework that promotes authentic historical inquiry and understanding among learners.

2.5.4.1. The definitions of Historical Thinking

To begin with, the definition of *historical thinking* has gained little controversy in educational research since the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in the UK (VanSledright, 2009; Lévesque, & Clark, 2018). Scholars have identified a set of procedural concepts that are essential for understanding history education deeply involving the development of cognitive competencies such as understanding continuity and change, evaluating evidence, and fostering historical empathy, with varying emphasis and implementation across different countries and curricula (Drake, & Brown, 2003).

The concept of historical thinking is increasingly recognized as essential in history education, yet it remains underexplored in classroom practices compared to traditional methods focused on memorizing factual knowledge (Levesque and Clark, 2018). According to Stéphane Levesque (2008, p.14), historical thinking has been described as "marginal and undocumented," highlighting the need for a more structured approach to its implementation in educational settings.

The concept of historical thinking is multifaceted and lacks a single, universally accepted definition, reflecting the complexity of history as both an academic discipline and a school subject. It is important to remember some definitions of historical thinking concepts given by scholars as a starting point for rethinking how we teach history. Historical thinking is fundamentally about engaging in specific cognitive operations necessary for careful interpretation of the past (Duquette, 2015). Sam Wineburg's concept of historical thinking, articulated in his influential work *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts* (2001), emphasizes the complexities involved in understanding history. He describes historical thinking as an "unnatural act," suggesting that it requires deliberate instruction and comprehension rather than being an instinctive process. Historical thinking concepts are critical thinking, creative thinking, to analysis, to determine cause-effect, to interpret, to inference, to conclude, to use historical concepts (Hasan, 2018).

Shemilt (2015, p. 253) articulates the importance of defining and operationalizing historical thinking (HT) within the current educational paradigm, emphasizing that it encompasses a range of *cognitive processes* and *conceptual tools* essential for understanding history. To be succinct with the definition given by Levesque (2016, p. 6), historical thinking serves as a critical "mental toolkit for engaging with the multiple narratives of the past that individuals encounter in their daily lives". This perspective emphasizes the importance of teaching historical thinking concepts in education, as these skills not only enhance students' understanding of history but also prepare them to think holistically about human culture.

Key publications in the first two decades of the twenty-first century have significantly advanced the field of history education, particularly in the area of historical thinking. Notable contributions include *Theorizing Historical Consciousness* (edited by Peter Seixas) - This foundational work set the stage for understanding historical consciousness in educational contexts. *Benchmarks of Historical Thinking: A Framework for Assessment in Canada* (Seixas, 2006) - Seixas developed a comprehensive model that outlines essential components of historical thinking, emphasizing the skills necessary for students to engage critically with history. *Thinking Historically: Educating Students for the Twenty-First Century* (Lévesque, 2008) - This publication explores critical questions about historical thinking and pedagogy, offering benchmarks for what students should learn to become informed historical actors and citizens. *The Big Six Historical Thinking Concepts* (Seixas and Morton, 2013) - This framework identifies six interrelated concepts essential for historical thinking: establishing historical significance, using primary source evidence, identifying continuity and change, analyzing cause and consequence, taking historical perspectives, and understanding the ethical dimension of historical interpretations. *Teaching History for the Common Good* (Barton and Levstik, 2004) - This work emphasizes the role of history education in fostering civic engagement and social responsibility among students. *Historical Reasoning: Towards a Framework for Analyzing Students' Reasoning about the Past* (Drie, & Boxtel, 2008) suggest that historical reasoning involves components such as asking historical questions, using sources, contextualization, argumentation, understanding historical significance, and perspective taking, and can be enhanced through explicit teaching of strategies. *Doing History: Investigating with Children in Elementary and Middle Schools* (Levstik and Barton, 2015) - This publication focuses on practical approaches to teaching history to younger

students, promoting inquiry-based learning. Contributions from Bruce VanSledright (2004, 2011) and Sam Wineburg (1991, 2001) are also pivotal in shaping contemporary understandings of historical thinking, particularly regarding how students process historical information and develop critical analysis skills.

In addition, it is worth to note the works of the Counsell et al. (2016), Carretero et al. (2017), and Epstein and Salinas (2018) are notable publications that discuss key methodological concepts, research lines, teaching practices, and objectives of history teaching focusing on historical thinking and historical consciousness. Despite the increase in studies over recent decades in North America and Europe, there is still only a limited number of studies in Africa and even a lacuna of comprehensive understanding of history education in Ethiopia (Levstik, & Barton, 2004; Boadu, 2020; Gómez-Carrasco et al., 2022).

2.5.4.2. Models of Historical Thinking concepts

This disciplinary and metacognitive knowledge in the domain of history education was first defined by the work of Wineburg's seminal study (1991), an original study documenting how disciplinary historians read historical texts in fundamentally different ways than students and later extended by the Stanford History Education Group (SHEG).

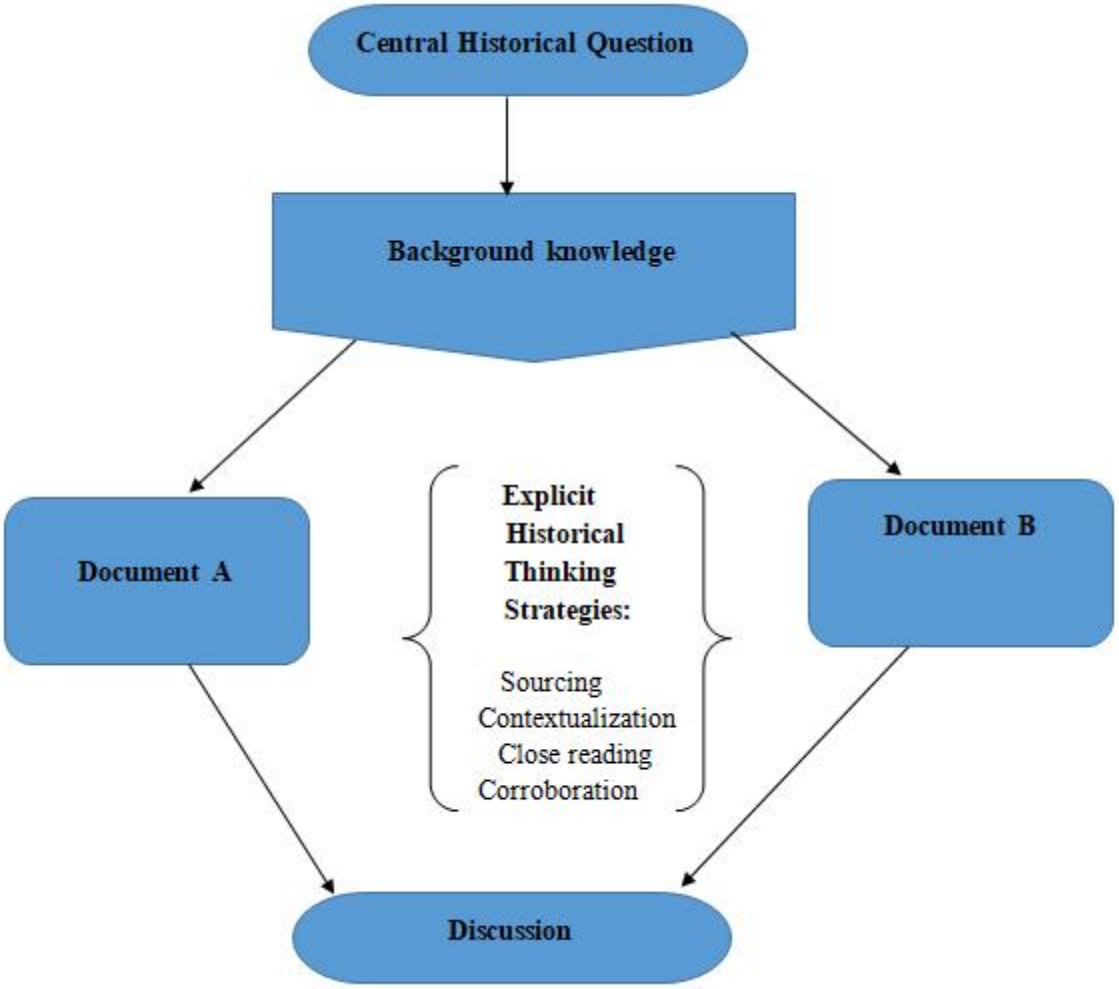
Recent studies on the state of history education have identified three distinct research schools or spheres: the *Anglo-American school*, the *German school*, and the *Dutch sphere*. Each of these schools approaches history education with unique philosophies and methodologies (Carrasco, & Serrano, 2022, pp. 26-27). The Anglo-American school emerged from innovative practices in England and expanded into the United States and Canada. This school is characterized by a practical and empirical approach, emphasizing the application of *historical thinking*. In contrast, the German school adopts a more philosophical and theoretical perspective. It centers around the concept of *historical consciousness*, advocating for a model that integrates cognitive skills with the use of historical knowledge for personal guidance in contemporary contexts. The Dutch sphere presents a unique perspective by promoting *historical reasoning* as an educational objective. This school advocates for integrating historical skills from both the Anglo-American

and German models, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of history that combines analytical skills with practical applications in real-life situations (Carrasco, & Serrano, 2022, pp. 26-27).

For the purpose of this study, I employ the *Reading Like a Historian* model, which has been developed by the Stanford History Education Group. The *Reading Like a Historian* (RLH) curriculum has gained significant traction since its launch in 2010, being utilized in all 50 states and 127 countries, with over one million downloads (Wineburg, & Reisman, 2015). The reason why I employ *Reading Like a Historian* (RLH) is due to its significant impact on students' historical thinking and understanding. Research shows that students who receive RHL instruction outperform their peers in four pillars of history education: historical thinking, factual knowledge, general reasoning, and reading comprehension (Reisman, 2012a; 2012b; Wineburg, & Reisman, 2015).

Sam Wineburg and the Stanford History Education Group have developed a framework for teaching historical thinking concepts that encourages students to engage in historical inquiry actively. The Reading Like a Historian (RLH) curriculum emphasizes transforming reading from passive reception to an active interrogation of historical texts through critical questioning about the author, context, and time of documents. The strategies for *Reading Like a Historian* include sourcing, contextualizing, corroborating, and close reading (Wineburg, 1991a, 1991b; http://sheg.stanford.edu/rlh). The interactions will be done in the form of the figure 1 below:

Figure 1: RLH: Document-Based Lesson



Adapted and taken from Reisman, 2012b, p. 91)

Sourcing: refers to the act of attending to the reliability and credibility of historical evidence by identifying and analyzing the author's perspective, motive, and biases (Riesman and Fogo, 2015, p. 154). It involves examining the source of a document before reading the text, examining its type, author(s), and authenticity. This helps readers understand the source and the information contained, enabling them to better comprehend the text (Wineburg, 1991b; Bain, 2005; Reisman, 2012; Lévesque and Clark, 2018; Wineburg, & Reisman, 2015).

Corroboration refers to an act of comparing the accounts of multiple sources against each (Merkt, Werner, & Wagner, 2017). In this process, learners check whether information is backed by

multiple sources or whether there exists contradictory information. Learners verify information from multiple sources, ensuring corroboration and increasing confidence in source accuracy. This process helps readers assess the reliability of different perspectives (Wineburg, 1991b; Bain, 2005; Reisman, 2012; Lévesque and Clark, 2018).

Contextualization refers to the act of situating/placing a document, events, people, and artifacts within a particular historical time and place, allowing readers to understand the historical period (Wineburg and Reisman, 2015; Wineburg, 1991b; Lévesque and Clark, 2018). Chronology is essential for contextualizing events, connecting different times, places, and people. It fosters historical empathy and understanding, while adolescents evaluate past events through contemporary worldviews (Reisman and Fogo, 2015).

*Close Reading***:** Accurately identifying the source information for a document allows the reader to place the document in context and identify potential bias within the document. Close reading can be used to question an author's motivation for making a statement, to delve deeper into the motivations of the characters in the text, and to gain a more complete understanding of the events in the text. Furthermore, close reading is directly related to sourcing; evaluating a document's argument, word choice, or tone necessitates an understanding of the author's point of view and purpose (Reisman, 2012b).

Concisely, these studies suggest that the Reading Like a Historian approach effectively equips students with historical thinking concepts, critical thinking, and the ability to analyze multiple perspectives through strategies like sourcing, contextualizing, and corroborating, rather than relying on memorization. In other words, the acts of corroboration, close reading, sourcing, and contextualization are indispensable for making sense of historical texts. These methods allow historians to construct a nuanced understanding of past events and figures, recognizing that history is often complex and multifaceted. By employing these techniques, scholars can better appreciate the intricacies of historical narratives and the contexts from which they arise (See *Appendix A: Historical Thinking Chart)*.

2.5.4.3. Assessment of Historical thinking

The design of assessments for historical thinking faces challenges such as balancing content knowledge with historical thinking concepts, the need for diverse assessment tools, and the limitations of multiple-choice formats in capturing complex historical reasoning (Ercikan, Seixas, Kaliski, & Huff, 2016; Ercikan, & Seixas, 2015). Mark Smith and Joel Breakstone (2015) explicitly defined components of historical thinking for the secondary history curriculum, yielding a framework for the processes that secondary students should develop and guiding our development of new types of assessments.

In assessing how student performance should be interpreted and evaluated in relation to the targeted constructed response, this study refers to the scoring rubric developed by (Edmunds, 2006; Monte-Sano, 2012, p, 295; Monte-Sano, & De La Paz, 2012, p. 284; VanSledright, 2014, pp. 91–92; the "Short Essay Rubric" developed by USC Center for Excellence in Teaching: https://ucdavis.box.com/s/g0qbahsgf6j1ovqf98857kkj04o4uwh6). As a whole, this rubric measured the extent to which students synthesized ideas from documents into an argument, or interpretation, provided supporting evidence, contextualized their argument, and recognized the perspectives of historical actors in their written work (Monte-Sano, & De La Paz, 2012).

Steiss et al (2024) argued that holistic evaluation views writing as a single, unidimensional construct, while analytic evaluation considers multiple dimensions such as structural organization, language use, and conventions. This rubric is aimed to assesses historical reading, thinking, and writing instruction, evaluating proficiency in substantive and procedural knowledge, including evidence-based claims, reasoning, discussion, reflection, argument writing, and historical analysis

Table 1: Holistic Scoring Rubric of Overall RLH Strategies

	Rubric descriptor	Study
Sourcing	✔ Sourcing is a fundamental historical thinking strategy as it can expose the bias of the writer, that involves	Wineburg, 1991, 1998; 2001;

	using information about an author, audience, and purpose to understand and use historical evidence in argumentative historical writing. ✔ Includes a consideration of where information comes from (e.g., primary or secondary sources) and what kind of document it is (e.g., newspaper, article, editorial, diary, speech). ✔ Sourcing a text requires students to examine not only the publication date and the author's biographical statement, but also where, and determining for what purpose and identifying the audience for whom it was intended.	Nokes, 2017; Massey, 2015; Shanahan, Shanahan, & Misischia, 2011; Cowgill & Waring, 2017; Hynd, Holschuh, & Hubbard, 2004
contextualizing	✔ Placing events, people, or phenomena within the broader framework of their time and circumstances to understand their significance and impact. This process considers various factors, including the Political Context, Social Dynamics, Economic Factors, Cultural Influences, Technological Developments, and Global Connections of that time. Historical contextualization is essential for understanding the complexities of past events and how they shape the present.	Wineburg, 1991, 1998, 2001; Reisman, & McGrew, 2018; Shanahan *et al.,* 2011; Cowgill & Waring, 2017; Hynd, Holschuh, & Hubbard, 2004
corroborating	✔ Corroboration is an intertextual consideration of agreements and disagreements across multiple texts or between the text and one's own knowledge. ✔ Historical corroboration is the process of verifying the accuracy and reliability of historical information by cross-referencing multiple sources. This practice	Wineburg, 1991, 1998, 2001; Reisman, & McGrew, 2018; Massey, 2015; Shanahan *et al.,*

	helps historians establish a more nuanced understanding of past events and assess their credibility. ✔ Corroboration helps historians piece together a more reliable narrative and can reveal gaps, contradictions, or biases in existing accounts.	2011; Cowgill & Waring, 2017; Hynd, Holschuh, & Hubbard, 2004
Close Reading/ Rereading	✔ Students carefully examine the language and content of a document to understand the author's claims and how they support those claims with evidence. This involves paying close attention to word choice, tone, and rhetorical strategies. ✔ Historical close reading is an analytical approach that combines the close examination of texts with an understanding of their historical context; analyzing a particular words, sentences, and paragraphs rather than merely reading for the gist ✔ Tools used in close reading include reading and rereading for specific purposes, annotating, summarizing, determining significance, providing and evaluating evidence, and discussing the text with peers and teachers using academic talk and evidence-based reasoning.	Wineburg, 1991, 1998, 2001; Fisher, & Frey, 2014; Shanahan *et al.,* 2011; Cowgill & Waring, 2017; Hynd, Holschuh, & Hubbard, 2004

Analytical Rubric for evaluating Students RLH outcomes

For this study, we have developed four levels of coding schemes to evaluate the quality of students' historical reading, thinking and writing based on the posed historical questions. Here is a sample rubric structure employed with a scoring system from 4 - Excellent/Exemplary) to 0-Unsatisfactory (see Table 2).

Table 2: Analytical Rubric for evaluating Students RLH outcomes

Sourcing Score	Indicators of historical reading, thinking, and writing quality
4—Excellent/ Exemplary	● Effectively evaluates the credibility and perspective of sources. ● Shows a thorough understanding of the question. ● Identifies and evaluates the source's author, purpose, and perspective with thoroughness.
3—Proficient/ Good	● Generally assesses sources, noting some biases. ● Presents a general understanding of the question. ● Usually identifies key aspects of the source.
2—Satisfactory	● Attempts to source but lacks depth or accuracy. ● Shows a limited understanding of the question. ● Recognizes authors' names and their general points of view, but offers a limited explanation of their perspectives.
1—Needs Improvement	● Fails to evaluate sources. ● Does not answer the specific central question. ● Shows limited understanding of source evaluation.
0—Remain passive/ Unsatisfactory	● Completely ignores the question. OR ● No attempt made; blank paper. ● Student does not write about the source of the document.
contextualizing	
4—Excellent/ (Exemplary)	● Effectively places historical events within broader social, political, and economic contexts, accurately situates the source within historical context, explaining its relevance. ● Student skillfully situates the document in the proper context and uses contextual clues to strengthen written argument ● Supports the interpretation with specific, relevant evidence that

	includes multiple quotations and facts. ● Integrates specific contextual, background information to situate, explain and support the interpretation.
3—Proficient/ Good	● Understands the broader context but may miss some nuances, generally contextualizes events, with some gaps. ● Student to some extent situates the document in the proper context and uses some contextual clues to strengthen written argument ● Supports the interpretation with relevant evidence that includes at least two quotations or facts. ● Integrates some contextual, background information to situate, explain, and support the interpretation.
2—Satisfactory	● Provides minimal context for the source attempts to provide context but lacks clarity or depth. ● Student attempts to situate the document in the proper context but overlooks key detail(s) in connecting the document to a time, place, or person ● Supports the interpretation with relevant evidence that includes at least one quotation or fact. ● Refers to the particular historical context.
1—Needs Improvement	● Fails to contextualize events. ● student mentions the context but does not use context information to bolster written argument ● little attempts made to support the interpretation with relevant evidence and interpretation or information may have major errors or may be irrelevant.
0—Remain passive/	● Student does not attempt to contextualize the document ● No attempt made to support the interpretation with relevant

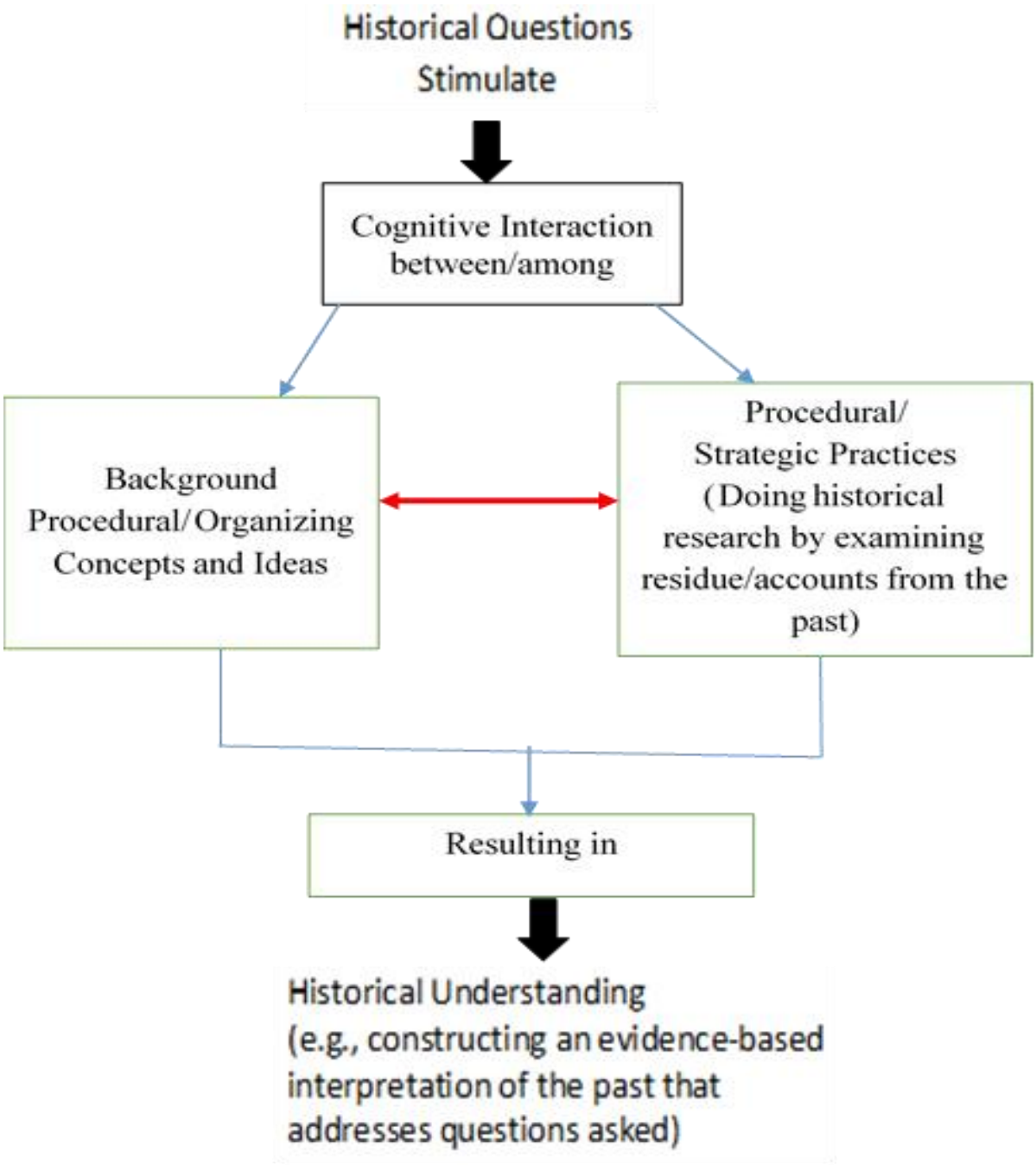
Unsatisfactory	evidence.
Corroboration	
4—Excellent/ Exemplary	● Effectively corroborates evidence from multiple sources to build a s trong argument**; s**killfully compares multiple sources, identifying agreements and contradictions to present a nuanced view. ● Compares/contrasts multiple accounts/perspectives directly to form interpretation. ● Analyzes, evaluates, compares, and/or contrasts issues and events with depth. ● Student effectively corroborates many claims using areas of convergence between documents using sound reasoning ● Supports the interpretation with specific, relevant evidence that includes multiple quotations or facts; Evidence and interpretation are historically accurate.
3—Proficient/ Good	● Compares sources with some effectiveness, noting key similarities and differences, adequately compares sources but lacks depth. ● Attempts to corroborate but misses some connections. ● Compares/contrasts accounts to form interpretation but not as consistently, clearly, or directly as a 4. ● Analyzes or evaluates issues and events, but not in any depth. ● Student effectively corroborates a few claims using an area of convergence between documents using sound reasoning
2—Satisfactory	● Makes limited comparisons with minimal connections drawn. ● Relies on few sources and fails to provide a balanced view, allusions (indirect) to comparing/contrasting perspectives, but ignores some accounts or perspectives. ● Lacks analysis or evaluation of the issues and events beyond stating

	accurate, relevant facts. ● Student attempts to corroborate a claim by citing multiple documents but uses ahistorical or unsound reasoning
1—Needs Improvement	● Fails to corroborate or presents isolated evidence. ● No evidence of corroboration because of unidirectional, simplistic interpretation. ● Lacks analysis or evaluation of the issues and events beyond stating vague, irrelevant, and/or inaccurate facts. ● Student superficially attempts corroboration by simply citing multiple documents
0—Remain passive/ Unsatisfactory	● Does not engage in corroboration. ● No evidence of corroboration as though multiple perspectives in accounts did not exist/not possible. ● Student does not attempt to corroborate claims
Close Reading	
4—Excellent/ Exemplary	● Analyzes the text closely, noting significant details and drawing ins ightful conclusions, constructs a well-reasoned argument supported by evidence from sources. ● Strong, coherent arguments with robust evidence ● Claim builds on or substantiates another claim ● Recognizes authors' names and fully explains the point of view or perspectives presented in the documents and relevant to the topic (e.g., purposes, interests, worldviews, biases, reasons for historical actors' words and actions).
3—Proficient/ Good	● Notices and interprets key details but lacks depth, presents an argument that is mostly supported by evidence, though some

	connections may be weak ● Clear arguments with good evidence ● Claim is paraphrased, explained or grounded in a historical quote ● Recognizes authors' names and partially explains the point of view or perspectives presented in the documents and relevant to the topic.
2— Satisfactory	● Attempts to argue but lacks clarity or sufficient evidence. ● Student attempts to determine themes, patterns, events, figures but uses ahistorical or unsound reasoning ● Claim appears in a list or quote without explanation
1—Needs Improvement	● Provides a superficial analysis of the text, ● Weak arguments with limited evidence ● Limited claims are used in support of a position.
0—Remain passive/ Unsatisfactory	● Does not present a coherent argument ● No clear argument, lacking evidence ● No claims are used in support of a position

By focusing on both substantive content and procedural knowledge, educators can enhance students' abilities to engage in meaningful historical inquiry, ultimately leading to a richer understanding of the past (VanSledright, 2011, 2014). See the toolkit of assessing historical thinking and understanding depicted in figure 2.

Figure 2: Cognitive Model of history Education



Adapted from Vansledright, 2011, p. 158 & 2014, p. 40.

Figure 2 presents a conceptual model of historical inquiry and understanding. The process begins when historical questions stimulate investigation, serving as the catalyst for deeper exploration. These questions drive the intellectual work of historical analysis and interpretation.

At the core of the model is the cognitive interaction between two essential components. First, background procedural and organizing concepts provide the foundational knowledge, theories, and historical frameworks that shape our approach to investigation. Second, procedural and strategic practices represent the active research process involving source analysis, document evaluation, and evidence interpretation.

A critical feature of this model is the dynamic, two-way interaction between background knowledge and research practices, represented by the red double-headed arrow. As researchers engage with historical sources, new insights can refine and expand their conceptual understanding. Conversely, existing knowledge informs and guides research strategies, creating a continuous cycle of learning and discovery.

The culmination of this process is historical understanding - the ability to construct evidence-based interpretations of the past that meaningfully address the original historical questions. This model emphasizes history as an active, iterative process of inquiry rather than simple fact accumulation, highlighting how questions, knowledge, and research practices interact to produce historical understanding.

2.6. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework for Teaching Historical Knowledge and Thinking Skills through the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) Strategy

This study is rooted in social constructivism and historical thinking theory. Constructivist learning theory perceives learning as active process where students build understanding through inquiry, collaboration, and interaction with sources **(**Windschitl, 2002; Van Straaten et al., 2016). Historical Thinking: Emphasizes procedural skills (sourcing, corroboration, contextualization & Close Reading) and conceptual understanding (significance, cause/consequence) to engage students in disciplinary practices (Seixas, Wineburg). The two theories aligns with Ethiopia's General Curriculum Framework (2020), which prioritizes inquiry-based learning and critical thinking.

The conceptual framework for teaching historical knowledge and thinking skills through the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) strategy is rooted in three interconnected theoretical foundations:

constructivist learning theory, historical thinking concepts, and design-based research (DBR) methodology. The framework synthesizes key theoretical perspectives, pedagogical strategies, and contextual factors influencing the teaching and learning of history. This conceptual framework is built upon three foundational theoretical perspectives that collectively support the integration of the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) approach into Ethiopian secondary school history education.

The first pillar, Constructivist Learning Theory, emphasizes that students actively construct knowledge through inquiry, discussion, and critical engagement with sources. This perspective aligns with Ethiopia's General Education Curriculum Framework (2020), which advocates for student-centered and inquiry-based learning. Key principles of constructivism include eliciting students' prior knowledge, engaging them in problem-based activities, fostering collaborative learning and dialogue, and encouraging reflective and autonomous thinking. These principles shift the classroom dynamic from passive absorption of information to active participation, making history education more meaningful and relevant to students' lives.

The second pillar is the framework of historical thinking concepts, as articulated by scholars such as Seixas and Morton (2013) and Wineburg (2001). This perspective defines history as an interpretive discipline that requires analytical skills rather than rote memorization. Core historical thinking skills include sourcing (evaluating the origin, purpose, and reliability of historical documents), contextualization (placing events within their historical time and place), corroboration (comparing multiple sources to assess consistency and bias), and close reading (analyzing language, tone, and argumentation in historical texts). These skills enable students to investigate historical questions, assess the reliability of various viewpoints, and construct well-supported historical interpretations, moving beyond the memorization of facts to deeper, evidence-based understanding (Colis et al., 2016).

The third theoretical pillar is the Design-Based Research (DBR) Methodology, which guides the iterative development and implementation of the RLH intervention. DBR involves cycles of design, implementation, evaluation, and refinement, ensuring that the RLH strategy is contextually adapted to Ethiopian classrooms. The DBR process begins with analysis and

exploration to identify challenges in current history teaching, followed by the design and construction of RLH lesson plans and teacher training, and concludes with evaluation and reflection to assess the intervention's impact on both teachers and students allowing for continuous improvement.

Within this framework, several key components shape the RLH intervention. First, teacher epistemological beliefs play a critical role in the success of the strategy. Teachers' epistemological beliefs about history-whether they view it as a fixed body of facts or as an interpretive discipline-significantly influence their instructional methods. Findings indicate that many Ethiopian history teachers hold traditional, fact-based views of history, which can limit their ability to foster critical inquiry in students. Professional development is therefore essential to help teachers shift toward more interpretive, evidence-based teaching methods. Second, the curriculum and textbook analysis reveals that current Ethiopian textbooks emphasize lower-order thinking skills (e.g., remembering and understanding) over higher-order skills (e.g., analyzing, evaluating, and creating). The RLH strategy addresses this gap by supplementing textbooks with primary and secondary sources that encourage historical inquiry.

The instructional design of the RLH strategy follows a structured sequence. Lessons begin by activating prior knowledge, connecting new content to students' existing understanding. Teachers then pose guiding historical questions that are open-ended and debatable, prompting students to engage in deeper analysis. The heart of the lesson involves document analysis, where students apply sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, and close reading skills to historical texts. This is followed by whole-class discussions that encourage evidence-based argumentation, culminating in historical writing tasks where students construct well-reasoned interpretations. To assess student learning, the RLH approach moves beyond traditional multiple-choice and short-answer tests, incorporating document-based questions (DBQs) and argumentative writing. Rubrics are used to evaluate students' use of evidence, historical reasoning, and ability to consider multiple perspectives.

The implementation of the RLH strategy is influenced by several contextual factors in Ethiopian classrooms. Challenges include large class sizes (often exceeding 60 students), which can limit

opportunities for interactive learning; limited access to primary sources and digital resources, which restricts the variety of materials available for analysis; and teacher reliance on textbooks, which are often the sole instructional resource. Additionally, examination pressures that favor memorization over critical thinking pose a significant barrier to adopting inquiry-based methods. Despite these challenges, there are opportunities for improvement, such as teacher training programs focused on historical thinking skills, curriculum revisions to include more inquiry-based activities, and the development of local historical archives to provide richer classroom materials.

The expected outcomes of this framework are multifaceted. For teachers, the RLH intervention aims to shift instructional practice from lecture-based to inquiry-driven methods. For students, it increases motivation and engagement through active learning and debate, and enhances historical thinking by improving skills in sourcing, contextualization, and argumentation. In terms of assessment, the framework promotes a greater emphasis on evidence-based writing and analysis, aligning with the broader goals of competency-based education reform in Ethiopia. Use a circular or cyclical diagram with arrows connecting Context Analysis → Design principles → Implementation and Intervention → Evaluation and Reflection → Back to Design.

Table 3: Overview of Conceptual Framework

Component	**Description**
Context/Problem	Teacher-centered, textbook-driven instruction with limited inquiry and critical thinking.
Theoretical Foundation	Constructivism, Historical Thinking Theory, DBR methodology.
Intervention Strategy (Independent Variable)	Core practices of RLH approach: Historical questioning, Sourcing, Contextualization, Corroboration, Close Reading.
Mediating Variables	Teacher beliefs, curriculum alignment, class size, resource access, classroom design, student motivation.
Implementation Approach	Design-Based Research with iterative refinement cycles.
Expected Student Outcomes (Dependent Variables)	Foster students critical and historical thinking skills, historical empathy, evidence-based reasoning, motivation, engagement,

The conceptual framework links the theoretical base to the study's design, variables, and expected outcomes. The central intervention—**Reading Like a Historian (RLH)**—operates within a system influenced by mediating conditions and aimed at improving student outcomes. This conceptual framework (Table 3) guides the study's design, implementation, and evaluation, ensuring that the RLH intervention is directly linked to the challenges identified in Ethiopian history education and is grounded in robust educational theory and research.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter details the study's methodology in three sections. Part One establishes the philosophical underpinnings and assumptions guiding the research design. Part 2 outlines the design-based approach, emphasizing iterative cycles of intervention development and real-world collaboration. Part 3 specifies the methods, including participant selection, data collection (e.g., interviews, surveys), and analysis techniques (thematic/statistical), while addressing rigor through triangulation, credibility, and reliability measures. Each component is tailored to address the study's five research questions, ensuring methodological coherence and trustworthiness.

3.2. Research Paradigm

Research is fundamentally shaped by underlying philosophical assumptions regarding validity and the methods employed, often operating beneath the surface of explicit research practices. The predominant research paradigms recognized in the literature include positivism/post-positivism, constructivism, advocacy/participatory, and pragmatism (Tashakkori, Johnson, & Teddlie, 2020; Creswell, 2009). No research paradigm is superior, but each has a specific purpose in providing a unique means of producing knowledge (Creswell, 2009).

This research uses a pragmatist worldview to study context-specific problems from multiple perspectives, focusing on processes rather than events. The research explores participants' activities, experiences, and perspectives, guided by a methodological framework that combines pragmatism and design-based research (McKenney, & Reeves, 2012; Anderson, & Shattuck, 2012).

3.3. Research Approach

In the present study, I employed the Mixed Method Research (MMR) approach. Pragmatism serves as a philosophical foundation for mixed methods research by allowing the integration of quantitative and qualitative approaches, emphasizing practical solutions, and supporting

methodological pluralism to address complex research questions (Creswell, 2009; Johnson & Christensen, 2019; Onwuegbuzie, Forzani, & Corrigan, 2023).

Pragmatism allows researchers to utilize a variety of methods based on their research needs rather than adhering strictly to one philosophical paradigm. This flexibility enables researchers to focus on the **practical implications** of their work, emphasizing "workability" over rigid adherence to traditional methodologies. Pragmatism also rejects the positivist view that social science can uncover an absolute truth, instead positing that knowledge is tentative and shaped by human experience and context (Creswell, 2009; Johnson & Christensen, 2019; Onwuegbuzie, Forzani, & Corrigan, 2023). Pragmatism encourages researchers to select methods that best serve their inquiry's goals, recognizing both the natural and social worlds' complexities. It promotes an **eclectic approach**, allowing for the combination of various data collection and analysis techniques. This perspective aligns with the notion that the choice of methods should be driven by the research questions rather than a commitment to any single philosophical stance. By embracing both deductive and inductive reasoning, pragmatist researchers can navigate diverse worldviews and assumptions, ultimately enhancing knowledge discovery in educational research (Onwuegbuzie, Forzani, & Corrigan, 2023; Creswell & Clark, 2017).

3.4. Design-Based Research (DBR)

Design-Based Research (DBR) has emerged as a prominent methodology in educational research that uses iterative designs to develop new theories, such as new instructional, pedagogical or learning theories and interventions, praised for its predictive ability and being situated in a real educational context (Plom, 2007; Anderson, & Shattuck, 2012; Tinoca, Piedade, Santos, Pedro, & Gomes, 2022).

Design-Based Research (DBR), also known as educational design research, is a systematic methodology aimed at addressing complex educational problems through the design, development, and evaluation of interventions (Plomp, 2013; Mckenney, and Reeves, 2012). This approach is characterized by its iterative nature, where researchers engage in cycles of designing solutions, implementing them in real educational settings, and refining them based on feedback

and data collected during the process. It aims to advance knowledge about intervention characteristics and design processes.

The family of Design-Based Research (DBR) includes various methodologies such as Design-Based Research, Design-Based Implementation Research, Development Research, Design Experiments, Formative Research, Realist Evaluation, Participatory Design Research, Action Research, and Design Research (Mckenney, and Reeves, 2021, p.85; Wang, & Hannafin, 2005, p. 7). This study utilizes Design-Based Research (DBR), which encompasses educational design research, design research, and design-based interventions in education (Reeves, & McKenney, 2012; Wang, & Hannafin, 2005; McKenney, and Reeves, 2021).

Design-Based Research (DBR) is characterized by its pragmatic, collaborative, intervening, iterative, adaptive, process-oriented, use-oriented, and theory-oriented nature (Plomp, 2013; Anderson & Shattuck, 2012; Wang, & Hannafin, 2005; McKenney, & Reeves, 2021). DBR is a comprehensive approach to tackling complex educational challenges, aiming to provide practical solutions and theoretical insights for future educational practices (McKenney, & Reeves, 2021).

Anderson and Shattuck (2012b, pp. 16-18) describes the eight quality of Design-Based Research (DBR) studies as being situated in a real educational context, focusing on significant intervention design and testing, using mixed methods, involving multiple iterations, collaborative partnerships, evolving practical design principles, differentiating from other research designs, and having practical impact on practice. This study explores the implementation of a Design-Based Research (DBR) approach, emphasizing its eight fundamental characteristics as outlined by Wolcott et al. (2019) and Onwuegbuzie, Forzani, & Corrigan (2023). These characteristics are crucial for applying rigorous methodological standards akin to those used in qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods studies.

Design-based research (DBR) is an innovative methodology in educational research that emphasizes the development and evaluation of interventions within real-world educational settings (Anderson, 2005). Unlike traditional laboratory studies, DBR focuses on the practical application of educational theories and practices, fostering a collaborative partnership between

practitioners and researchers. The DBR methodology is a cyclical and iterative research process, organized into different phases, where the research team analyzes data and generates knowledge applicable to the subsequent phases (Tinoca et al., 2022). Different authors have different views of what design-based research looks like, but they all agree that this type of research consists of a number of phases (McKenney & Reeves, 2012; Plomp, 2013, p. 19; Van den Akker, 2007; Armstrong et al., 2020; Cochrane et al., 2023).

While each researcher may use different methods for conducting educational research, McKenney & Reeves, (2012) suggested three core processes of DBR phases/cycles: analysis and exploration, design and construction, and evaluation and reflection, each crucial for developing effective educational interventions. They represent the three phases of the generic educational design research model as depicted in the figure 2.

① *Analysis and Exploration Phase (Micro-Cycle 1)*

In design-based research, the analysis and exploration phase is pivotal for establishing researcher-practitioner collaboration to co-define problems, investigate root causes, and map contextual and stakeholder needs (McKenney & Reeves, 2012). By examining analogous settings, this phase generates fresh perspectives for framing and addressing challenges. It serves as the foundation for shaping research questions, conducting literature reviews, and selecting methodologies aligned with the study's objectives and context (Pool & Laubscher, 2016; Van Zyl & Karsten, 2022; Armstrong et al., 2020). Through systematic inquiry into existing educational gaps, this phase ensures interventions are informed by empirical, theoretical, and contextual insights, bridging the divide between research and practice.

The data obtained during the analysis and exploration phase has served as a baseline for a development approach aiming at redesigning the process. Here, the open-ended or exploratory interviews focus group discussion, classroom observation, *Beliefs about History Questionnaire* (BHQ) to answer three research questions. Research Question 1, what epistemic stances do history teachers have held toward teaching disciplinary history in schools? Research Question 2, What kinds of substantive and procedural concepts of historical knowledge have

embedded in Grade 10 secondary school history textbooks and Research Question 3, What type of preparation and experiences do history teachers have with source analysis and historical thinking concepts in their universities' history content and methodology courses?' have been examined in this phase (see chapter 4).

This preliminary phase identified systemic challenges in Ethiopian educational practices, rooted in pedagogical methods, curriculum design, and ideological influences, as highlighted by scholars (Fisseha, 1992; Negash, 1990; Toggia, 2008; Ahmad, 2014; Joshi & Verspoor, 2012; Marzagora, 2017; Abbink, 2022; Wondimagegn & Mekonnen, 2022). Aligned with design-based research (DBR) frameworks, this phase—termed *Micro-Cycle 1*—served to diagnose contextual barriers and refine problem understanding through literature synthesis and stakeholder insights (Van Zyl & Karsten, 2022; McKenney & Reeves, 2012; Pool & Laubscher, 2016). By mapping these challenges, the study established a foundation for subsequent intervention design, ensuring alignment with both local realities and broader educational reform goals. Develop RLH-aligned lesson plans (e.g., document analysis activities) and train teachers in Historical Thinking Skills (HTS) through workshops, emphasizing sourcing, corroboration, and contextualization. Adapt materials to Ethiopia's multicultural context, integrating primary sources and local narratives.

② *Design and Construction Phase*

This phase bridges analysis and action through iterative, solution-oriented cycles aimed at developing practical educational interventions. Grounded in the *deliberative-generative cycle* (Mckenney & Reeves, 2012), it prioritizes creating actionable tools over hypothesis testing, fostering refinement of materials and approaches via feedback (Pool & Laubscher, 2016; Cochrane et al., 2023). By exploring diverse options and selecting the most viable solutions (Armstrong et al., 2020), it integrates theory with real-world applicability, ensuring interventions align with both research frameworks and practical classroom needs. As the second core phase in the research process, it emphasizes adaptability and co-creation, addressing challenges through iterative design while maintaining methodological rigor and contextual relevance (Mckenney and Reeves, 2012).

In educational design-based research, the researcher actively engages in iterative cycles of planning, constructing, implementing, evaluating, and refining educational interventions. This hands-on role ensures designs are theoretically grounded and practically relevant to classroom needs. Key activities include developing theoretical frameworks, prototyping models, creating instructional manuals, conducting practitioner workshops, testing interventions, and observing classroom implementation (Mckenney & Reeves, 2012). Through this iterative process, researchers co-create solutions with educators, enhancing both the intervention's effectiveness and broader insights into adaptive teaching practices. The phase emphasizes responsiveness to stakeholder feedback, fostering innovations that bridge research and real-world educational challenges.

Research Team: Educational Design Research (EDR) is fundamentally characterized by its collaborative nature, emphasizing the importance of engaging a diverse range of stakeholders in the research process (Mckenney and Reeves, 2012). This collaboration is essential for addressing complex educational problems and ensuring that interventions are relevant and effective. When certain aspects of a design are not functioning as intended, it is essential for the design team, including teachers or facilitators, to explore various options for improvement. This iterative approach is a fundamental principle of design-based research (DBR), which emphasizes continuous refinement and adaptation of educational interventions (Collins et al., 2004).

Design-based research (DBR) emphasizes collaborative teamwork over individual efforts, as advocated by scholars (Bannan, 2009; Cochrane et al., 2023; Van Zyl & Karsten, 2022; Nieveen & Folmer, 2013). Involving stakeholders—particularly end-users like educators—ensures richer problem diagnosis, context-sensitive design decisions, and sustained commitment. Benefits include enhanced intervention validity, iterative refinement of prototypes, shared professional growth, and alignment with systemic norms, all critical for addressing complex educational challenges (Bannan, 2009; Nieveen & Folmer, 2013).

In Ethiopia, where equity and quality education remain pressing goals (MoE, 2020), such collaboration is indispensable for fostering 21st-century competencies and advancing the national vision of equitable learning. Reflecting this, this study established an 11-

member *secondary school history teachers' research team* across two intervention schools in Shambu: five teachers from Shambu Secondary School and six from Shambu Secondary and Preparatory School. This team co-led the design, implementation, and evaluation of interventions, ensuring contextual relevance and bridging theoretical frameworks with classroom realities.

Central to this approach is the iterative refinement process: when design elements underperform, the research team (e.g., teachers, facilitators) collaboratively diagnoses issues, explores adaptive solutions, and revises the intervention. This cyclical, participatory ethos aligns with design-based research (DBR) principles, where continuous feedback and co-creation drive the evolution of effective educational practices (Collins et al., 2004). Such teamwork not only strengthens intervention validity but also empowers stakeholders as active partners in bridging theory and practice. Establish a multidisciplinary research team (educators, historians, policymakers) to co-design and pilot the intervention. Conduct iterative cycles: intervene (teach revised units), observe classroom dynamics, record student-teacher interactions, and refine strategies based on feedback.

In this phase, the study designed an instructional intervention prototype grounded in the needs, contextual insights, and recent literature on history education identified during the preliminary DBR exploration. The intervention integrates *"Reading Like a Historian"* scaffolds to foster active engagement for teachers and students, emphasizing critical analysis of historical sources. Guided by the theory of *situated learning* (Herrington & Oliver, 2000) and empirical studies on historical thinking, the plan structures authentic, collaborative tasks that mirror historians' practices (e.g., sourcing, contextualizing evidence). This approach aligns instructional principles with evidence-based strategies to enhance both pedagogical delivery and student learning outcomes. Details of the intervention's design, including lesson plans and scaffolding frameworks has elaborated in Chapter 4.

③ *Evaluation and Reflection Phase (Micro-Cycle 3)*

The final phase of design-based research (DBR) focuses on rigorous evaluation to determine whether the intervention aligns with predefined specifications and goals (Plomp, 2013). This stage integrates *formative* and *summative* evaluations (Nieveen & Folmer, 2013):

- **Formative Evaluation**: Iterative feedback loops (e.g., classroom observations, stakeholder interviews) guide real-time refinements to optimize the intervention's design and implementation.
- **Summative Evaluation**: Assesses overall effectiveness, providing evidence to justify scaling, adaptation, or discontinuation of the intervention (Cochrane et al., 2023).

Through systematic reflection, this phase strengthens design principles, ensures theoretical-practical coherence, and contributes actionable insights for both localized practice and broader educational theory. Use direct observations (structured rubrics) and semi-structured interviews with teachers to assess epistemic shifts, pedagogical challenges, and HTS integration. Analyze data through thematic coding and member checking to ensure validity.

Design researchers often collect large amounts of data, including video records and student outputs, to gain detailed insights into educational practices. Tests and quizzes are common methods for evaluating educational progress, but interviews and observations are also crucial for gaining insight into teachers and students' perspectives (Armstrong, 2020). However, this abundance of data can lead to significant hurdles in both collection and analysis (Collins et al., 2004). As researchers reflect on each change they made, they find what is most useful to the field at large, whether it be a failure or a success. The micro-cycle of the design and construction phase, along with the micro-cycle of the evaluation and reflection phase, collectively forms a meso-cycle in design-based research (DBR). This structure is essential for systematically collecting and analyzing empirical data to enhance educational interventions. This phase also allows for the collection of empirical data in the form of questionnaires (Pool & Laubscher, 2016).

In this study, a pre-test and post-test method was employed to assess students' attitudes towards learning history, textbooks, and teaching methods. Researchers reflect on their changes to

determine their most useful contribution to the field. They understand the context of their study and acknowledge the limitations they faced, despite finding positive impacts. This helps them avoid misinterpretation of the findings (Armstrong et al., 2020).

Educational design research follows a regulative cycle consisting of three main micro-cycles. Each phase has its own cycle of action and reasoning. The analysis and exploration phase and evaluation and reflection phase are empirical cycles, "featuring data collection" (Mckenney, & Reeves, 2012, pp. 77-78). The design phase has been customized to address the research questions, involving iterative progression, design, evaluation, and revision as seen in figure 6 adapted from Pool, & Laubscher, 2016; Van zyl and Karsten, 2022).

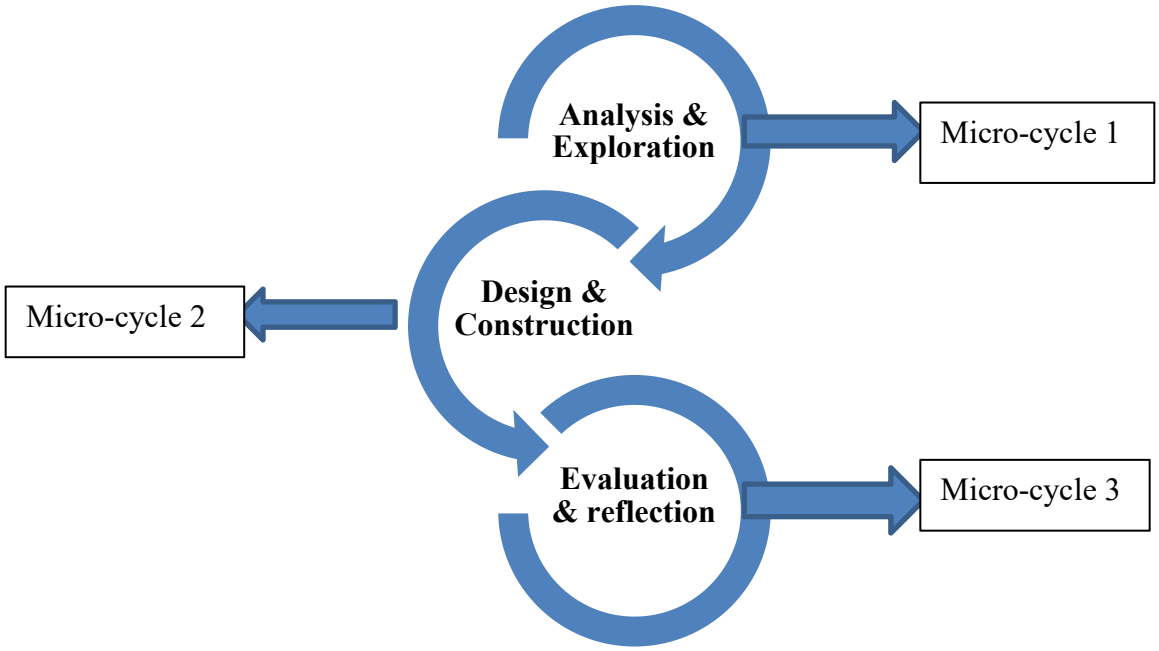


Figure 3: Three Phases of DBR informed by Micro-cycles

While design-based research (DBR) offers a robust framework for developing context-sensitive educational interventions, it is not without challenges. A central issue lies in the dual role of researchers, who act as both designers of interventions and impartial investigators. This overlap

can introduce bias, as researchers actively shape educational interactions through their designs rather than merely observing them (Barab & Squire, 2004, p. 9). Critics argue that such involvement risks undermining the credibility of findings, as researchers' deep engagement in the design process may cloud objectivity, complicating efforts to draw trustworthy conclusions about the efficacy of pedagogical strategies.

Another significant challenge involves defining the temporal scope of DBR projects, which often require multiple iterations to refine interventions and validate design principles (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012, p. 18). These iterative cycles, while critical for adaptation and improvement, extend timelines and demand sustained resources, posing logistical hurdles for researchers. Balancing rigor with practicality becomes essential, as overly prolonged cycles may delay actionable insights, while truncated ones risk incomplete validation. Together, these challenges underscore the need for transparency in documenting researchers' roles and methodological choices, ensuring that DBR's contributions to educational theory and practice remain both innovative and credible.

3.5. Rationale for Design-Based Research

This study employs Design-Based Research (DBR) as its methodological framework, guided by several key rationales. First, DBR represents an innovative approach to educational research, emphasizing adaptability, collaboration, and utility. Unlike traditional methods, it integrates theory and practice through iterative cycles, ensuring interventions are both theoretically grounded and pragmatically viable (McKenney & Reeves, 2012, p. 13). Its multilevel nature allows researchers to address systemic educational challenges while maintaining focus on context-specific outcomes, bridging the gap between abstract pedagogical theories and real-world classroom dynamics.

A core strength of DBR lies in its capacity to foster meaningful collaboration among researchers, educators, and stakeholders. By co-designing and refining interventions, the approach ensures that solutions are responsive to the needs of diverse educational settings. This participatory ethos not only enhances the relevance of findings but also increases the likelihood of sustained

implementation (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012). Furthermore, DBR's iterative structure—marked by repeated design, evaluation, and revision—enables researchers to dynamically adjust interventions based on empirical feedback, thereby improving both efficacy and scalability (Anderson, & Shattuck, 2012).

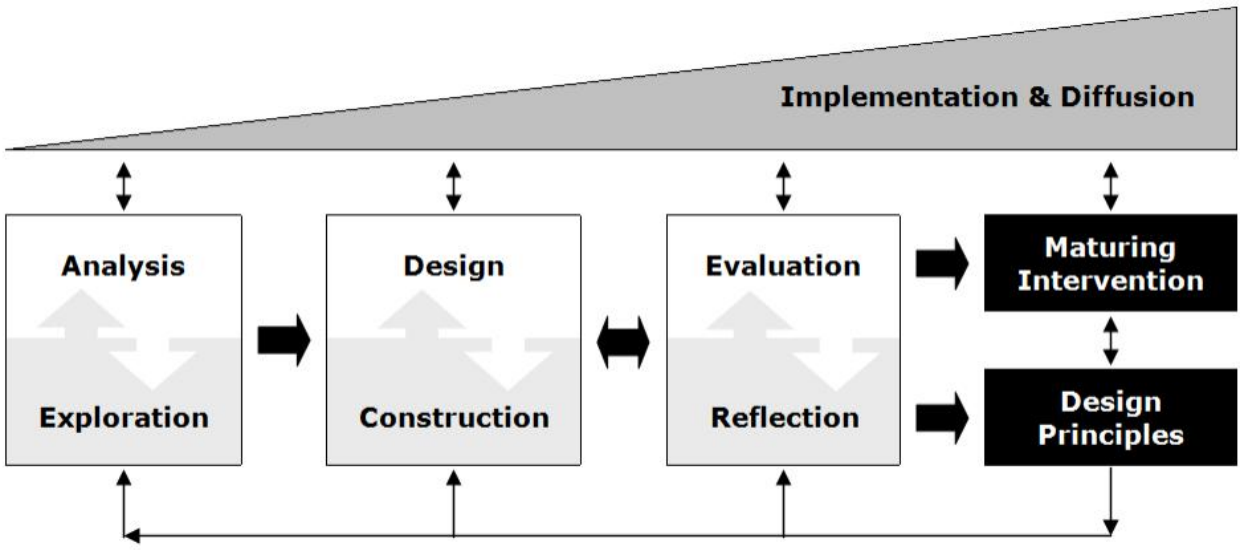
Finally, DBR is celebrated for its potential to elevate the quality and impact of educational research. By generating actionable insights that are directly applicable to teaching and learning contexts, it addresses longstanding critiques of educational research as overly abstract or underutilized (Barab & Squire, 2004). Traditional experimental research employs controlled groups without random assignment, while DBR uses small-scale interventions to impact individual teachers and schools, focusing on individual lives (Creswell, 2009, Anderson, & Shattuck, 2012, p.24).

In this study, DBR's dual focus on theoretical innovation and practical utility ensures that findings contribute not only to academic discourse but also to tangible improvements in history education practices. Mixed-methods research has become a cornerstone in history education, offering a dual lens to explore nuanced issues such as teachers' perspectives on historical thinking and students' experiences with instruction. By integrating qualitative depth (e.g., interviews, classroom observations) with quantitative breadth (e.g., surveys, assessments), this approach captures the multifaceted nature of educational practices, balancing process-oriented inquiry with actionable insights (Epstein & Salinas, 2018; Kelle et al., 2019). Such methodological synergy aligns with the pragmatic ethos of design-based research (DBR), which similarly prioritizes iterative, context-sensitive solutions to real-world challenges.

DBR's utility is particularly evident in scenarios where traditional instructional materials or strategies fall short. For instance, it addresses gaps in educator knowledge by co-developing resources through iterative design and evaluation; ensuring tools are both pedagogically sound and practically feasible. It also bridges divides when researchers lack expertise in specific content areas or instructional methods, fostering collaborative problem solving among stakeholders. Moreover, DBR is uniquely equipped to navigate external complexities—such as societal, policy, or political barriers—that impede educational progress. By engaging these

challenges through cyclical refinement, DBR not only generates adaptable interventions but also advances theoretical understanding of how learning ecosystems evolve under dynamic conditions (Kelly, 2013). Together, mixed-methods and DBR create a robust framework for transforming history education, merging empirical rigor with transformative practice.

Figure 4: Generic Model for conducting Educational Design Research



Generic model for conducting educational design research (McKenney & Reeves, 2012, p. 77).

Educational design-based research (DBR) operates through a *regulative cycle* comprising three interconnected tiers of iteration: micro-, meso-, and macro-cycles. As outlined by McKenney and Reeves (2012, p. 78), **micro-cycles** correspond to short-term iterations within individual phases of the research process—such as design, implementation, or evaluation—allowing for rapid adjustments based on emerging insights. These micro-cycles combine into **meso-cycles**, which span multiple phases (e.g., combining design and evaluation) to systematically refine interventions (see Figure 4). Over extended periods, **macro-cycles** emerge as sequences of meso-cycles, enabling longitudinal analysis of how interventions evolve and scale across diverse contexts (Pool & Laubscher, 2016).

This tiered structure balances agility with rigor. Micro-cycles foster responsiveness to immediate challenges, while meso-cycles ensure coherence across phases. Macro-cycles, in turn, contextualize findings within broader educational ecosystems, addressing sustainability and adaptability over time. By integrating these cycles, DBR provides a structured yet flexible framework for advancing both theoretical understanding and practical innovation in education.

3.6. Procedures of Teaching Intervention and Previous Research

The second phase of this DBR study focused on designing and implementing the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) intervention in Ethiopian secondary schools to enhance historical content knowledge and historical thinking metacognitive concepts in teaching and learning history. The second phase of Design-Based Research (DBR) represents a critical juncture for implementing targeted educational interventions, requiring careful integration of theoretical frameworks and practical considerations (McKenney & Reeves, 2012). This complex process demands comprehensive teacher training, clearly articulated design principles, and structured intervention models to ensure fidelity of implementation while addressing contextual challenges (Easterday et al., 2014; Armstrong et al., 2020).

The application of the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) strategy exemplifies this approach, combining disciplinary-specific literacy skills with adaptable pedagogical methods to transform history instruction (Stoel et al., 2015; Rozendal & Van Boxtel, 2022). Grounded in the READI framework's emphasis on evidence-based reasoning (Shanahan et al., 2016) and SHEG's documented success with sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration strategies (Monte-Sano, 2011; Wineburg et al., 2012), RLH offers a promising model for developing students' historical thinking competencies.

The Ethiopian context presents both opportunities and challenges for implementing RLH approaches. While historical thinking skills - including analysis of continuity/change, causation, and Multiperspectivity (Seixas, 2017) - align with global best practices in history education, successful adoption requires addressing local constraints. These include gaps in curriculum

materials, variable teacher preparation, and the need for culturally responsive adaptations (Retz, 2021; Reisman, 2012a).

The transformation from traditional fact-based instruction to inquiry-oriented practices necessitates careful consideration of assessment methods, professional development models, and strategies for overcoming resistance to pedagogical change. This study's pioneering work in applying DBR principles to Ethiopian history education provides a valuable foundation for addressing these implementation challenges while maintaining the integrity of RLH's core disciplinary practices (Pellegrino et al., 1999). Key measures and processes included:

3.6.1. Teacher Training and Professional Development

A four-day intensive training program was conducted from December 16-20, 2016 for eleven secondary school history teachers at Shambu College of Teacher Education as part of the intervention phase. The professional development workshop focused on introducing constructivist pedagogical approaches, historical thinking models, and specific Reading Like a Historian (RLH) strategies including sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, and close reading of historical documents (Reisman, 2012; Wineburg et al., 2012).

Neumann (2012) and Epstein (2012) adapted the training curriculum from established frameworks, with the primary goal of transitioning teachers from traditional lecture-based methods to more interactive, inquiry-based instructional approaches aligned with the RLH methodology. However, participants' feedback and observations revealed significant implementation challenges, particularly related to large class sizes averaging 60+ students, limited access to primary source materials, and heavy reliance on government-approved textbooks as the sole instructional resource (Wineburg, 1991; Thorp & Persson, 2020). These contextual constraints highlighted the need for adapted RLH strategies that could function within the realities of Ethiopian secondary school environments while still maintaining the core principles of history education domain knowledge.

Despite the 2020 curriculum reforms advocating for constructivist and active learning approaches, many in-service history teachers were trained under behaviorist paradigms, making

it difficult for them to adopt new methodologies. As part of the four-day training, one session was dedicated to addressing these curriculum changes. The Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2018-2030) introduces an 'inconclusive' curriculum approach, which encourages multiple perspectives in history education, fostering critical thinking and inclusivity (Teferra et al., 2018, p. 35).

After the training, two intervention teachers and one department head were selected to carry out the intervention process. However, they raised their challenges including overcrowded classrooms, insufficient resources, and varying student proficiency levels. While some teachers believed the method could be effective under optimal conditions, others acknowledged that their ability to apply it depended on the constraints of their school environment. Nevertheless, they recognized the potential benefits of the methodology, emphasizing the importance of critical engagement with history.

Teachers also highlighted the difficulty of accessing historical sources, relying heavily on textbooks as the main resource. Effective historical thinking requires exposure to multiple primary and secondary sources, yet securing such materials remains a significant challenge (Wineburg, 1991a, 1991b; Thorp & Persson, 2020; Husbands, Kitson, & Pendry, 2003). Despite these difficulties, the researcher maintains that integrating Reading Like a Historian lessons in Ethiopian schools is feasible. Counsell (2011) argues that while instilling historical thinking concepts proficiency in all students is challenging, it is a transformative approach which requires students to understand history as a discourse of the past human experiences.

Currently, Ethiopia lacks dedicated websites offering primary sources tailored for history education. The development of such resources is crucial to fostering historical thinking concepts among students. In contrast, developed countries provide extensive online resources, such as the Stanford History Education Group’s Reading Like a Historian lessons (Wineburg, Martin, & Monte-Sano, 2011), Historical Thinking Matters, and Canada’s Historical Thinking Project (Seixas) and Virtual Historian (Levesque). Additionally, resources like History Skills provide guidance on developing historical thinking competencies.

In response to these challenges, discussions during the training focused on practical ways to integrate Reading Like a Historian lessons into classrooms despite limited resources. Teachers agreed to use a combination of primary and secondary sources, excerpts, and digital tools to support students' historical thinking concepts. The success of the intervention depended on strong collaboration between teachers and the researcher, ensuring the effective execution of teaching strategies. Moving forward, addressing resource limitations and enhancing teacher training programs will be critical to the successful implementation of historical thinking in Ethiopian secondary schools.

3.6.2. Design principles for the Unit of Intervention

The process of designing the teaching intervention was grounded in international research while carefully adapting to Ethiopia's educational context. Drawing from the Stanford History Education Group's Reading Like a Historian (RLH) model (Reisman, 2012b), the intervention incorporated document-based lessons to develop students' historical content knowledge and historical thinking concepts. The design process began with a comprehensive literature review of successful interventions from North America and Europe (Barton & Levstik, 2004), while recognizing the need for context-specific adaptations for Ethiopian classrooms.

The intervention framework integrated both substantive knowledge (historical facts and concepts) and procedural knowledge (historical inquiry skills) (Havekes et al., 2012; Vansledright, 2011). Using the cognitive apprenticeship model (Collins et al., 1991), the design emphasized scaffolding through six key elements: modeling historical analysis, coaching students through tasks, providing structured support, encouraging articulation of reasoning, facilitating reflection, and promoting independent exploration. This instructional approach helps students acquire metacognitive strategies that support the comprehension and evaluation of historical sources.

Table 4: outlines key elements of cognitive apprenticeship

Content	**Types of Knowledge Required for Teachers**
Modeling	Teacher demonstrates tasks for students to observe

Coaching	Teacher provides guidance while students perform tasks
Scaffolding	Teacher supports students in task execution
Articulation	Teacher encourages students to verbalize their reasoning
Reflection	Teacher facilitates comparison of student work
Exploration	Teacher encourages students to pose and solve problems

The learning environment design followed student-centered principles (Maloy & LaRoche, 2010), with six instructional stages: activating prior knowledge, posing guiding historical questions, modeling historical reading/writing, facilitating whole-class discussions, assigning document analysis, and promoting independent inquiry.

Table 5: *The instructional design intervention for this study's follows a structured sequence of phases*

Phases of Instructional Stages	*Rationale*
Activating Prior Knowledge	Helps teachers identify students' existing conceptions and address misconceptions. This stage builds foundational historical background knowledge essential for reading and writing.
Formulating and asking guiding historical questions	Encourages problem-centered instruction by engaging students in real-world historical tasks, shifting from teacher-directed to student-directed learning.
Modeling and practicing historical reading and writing	Uses RLH heuristics (sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, and close reading) to make historical reasoning explicit.
Facilitating active learning and whole-class discussions	Promotes argumentation and collective knowledge-building, allowing students to practice evidence-based dialogue and historical interpretation.
Assigning additional reading of historical documents	Engages students in autonomous reading and analysis, structured into independent reading, peer discussions, and whole-class dialogue.
Promoting independent historical inquiry, confidence, critical thinking, better results and engagement	Encourages students to conduct historical investigations at their own pace, transitioning from guided to independent disciplinary literacy.

The stages of this intervention were strategically designed to shift students from reliance on teacher-directed instruction toward fostering *autonomous historical thinking*—a critical skill emphasizing independent analysis, evidence evaluation, and contextual interpretation of historical narratives (Laville, 2004).

Rooted in design-based research (DBR) principles, these stages incorporated iterative cycles of scaffolding, guided practice, and reflective inquiry. For example, initial phases introduced structured frameworks for analyzing primary sources, while subsequent stages gradually reduced teacher guidance, encouraging students to independently construct arguments and critique historical perspectives. This progression aligns with DBR's emphasis on adaptive, context-sensitive pedagogy, where iterative feedback from both learners and educators informs the refinement of instructional strategies (McKenney & Reeves, 2012). By embedding opportunities for self-directed exploration and collaborative discourse, the design not only bridged theoretical goals (e.g., critical thinking) with practical classroom dynamics but also addressed challenges identified in prior research, such as students' passive engagement with history (Epstein & Salinas, 2018). The outcome reflects DBR's capacity to cultivate learner agency while maintaining alignment with curricular standards and societal educational objectives.

3.6.3. Developing Reading Like a Historian Lesson Plan as an Orientating Pedagogical Framework

The development of Reading Like a Historian (RLH) lesson planning and orientation frameworks draws extensively on research-based pedagogical models for teaching historical contents and historical thinking concepts. The structured Document-Based Lesson (DBL) approach, as developed by the Stanford History Education Group (Reisman, 2012b), provides a three-phase framework: establishing historical background, analyzing 2-5 documents using core heuristics (sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, close reading), and evidence-based discussions that mirror historians' practices (Wineburg et al., 2012).

In this study, the students are expected to have already met with historical methods in their classroom-based education. Thus, the aim does not include the students to prove any sourcing, corroboration, and contextualization skills when visiting the archives (e.g. Wineburg, 1991). This model represents a significant departure from traditional textbook instruction. By engaging students in authentic historical inquiry through primary source analysis, a method shown to improve both content knowledge and disciplinary skills (Reisman, 2012; Oppong et al., 2022).

Research demonstrates that such document-based approaches enhance students' ability to evaluate multiple perspectives, recognize bias, and construct evidence-based arguments (Wineburg, 2001; Nokes, 2011). However, implementation requires careful scaffolding (Monte-Sano, 2010), particularly through differentiated text selection and guided questioning (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008), to address varying literacy levels. The RLH framework's effectiveness lies in its dual focus on developing substantive historical knowledge while cultivating the procedural skills of historical investigation (Puustinen & Khawaja, 2021), creating a transformative pedagogy that fosters deeper historical understanding. Conceptual Framework of RLH: A Document-Based Lesson (see Fig.1).

3.7. The Choice of Sites and the Research Process

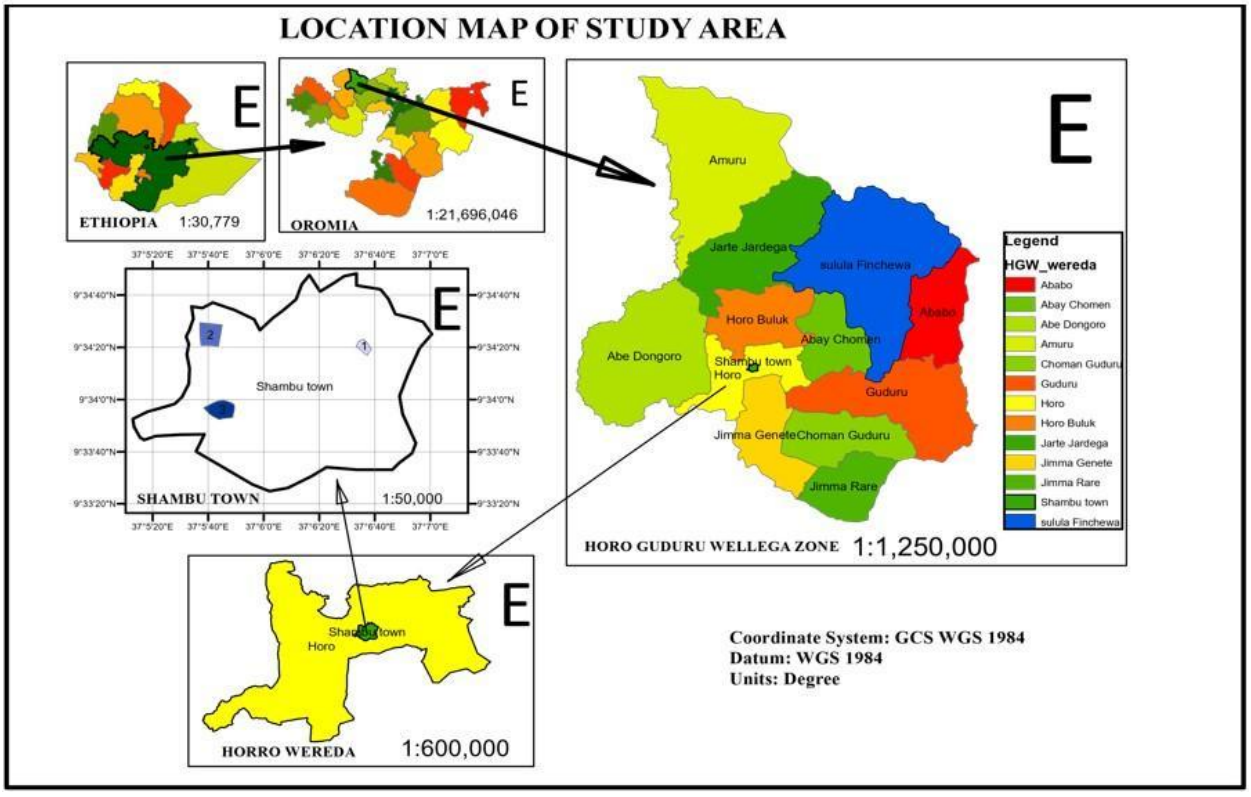
The study has specifically conducted in secondary schools located in the Horro Guduru Wallagga Zone, particularly in Shambu Town. Horro-Guduru is one of the Oromia zones. It is named after the former province of Wollega bordered by the Mormor (Abbay River) to the north, which serves as a natural boundary separating it from Gojjam. The East Wallaga Zone to the west and the West Shewa Zone to the east and south also border it. The administrative capital of the region is Shambu town, which is located approximately 315 kilometers west of Addis Ababa (Gabayo, 2020).

Historically, during imperial regimes, Horro Guduru Awrajja has been home to various Macha Oromo groups, including Horro, Guduru, Jimma, Ilu, challiya, Amuru, Jidda, Limmu, and Ebantu Oromo communities (Kenea, 2018). However in the current administration, the landscape of the zone is confined to the fourteen offspring of Horro and seven offspring of Guduru and the zone has a total of 11 Districts and one urban administrative town (see Figure 5).

The study sites generally have similar climates. Horro-Guduru Wallaga encompasses three distinct climatic zones: Baddaa (highland), Badda Daree (midland), and Gammoojjii (lowland), each characterized by unique ecological and socio-economic features. The Baddaa zone, the coldest region, is highly conducive to human settlement and livestock breeding due to its abundant rainfall and moderate temperatures. It supports the cultivation of cereal crops such as

barley, wheat, peas, and beans, and the Oromo tradition associates this climate with robust health and longevity among its inhabitants. The Badda Daree zone, with its moderate climate, serves as the primary area for settlement, agriculture, and pasture. This fertile region is ideal for growing teff, maize, millet, peas, beans, and oilseeds like nug and telba, while also being a hub for livestock raising. Gammoojjii is the hot lowland zone characterized by deep gorges and valleys formed by river erosion. It is home to dangerous wildlife such as buffaloes and lions but also supports the cultivation of sorghum and maize. Historically, much of this area was sparsely populated or unoccupied until resettlement programs in 1984/85 (Kenea, 2018; Gabayo, 2020).

Figure 5: Map of the Study Area



The study site is depicted in Figure 5, with Goticha Abishe Garba Secondary School, Shambu Secondary and Preparatory School, and Shambu Secondary School with their locations. The Shambu Administrative Town's Education Office manages five secondary schools, including four Public Schools and one Private School. Two schools, Shambu Secondary and Preparatory

School and Shambu Secondary School, were chosen through convenience sampling for a study using exploratory sequential core design to develop effective interventions and understand research sites' context and environment. The selection criteria for participants in the study included individuals who were eager to engage, specifically targeting schools, teachers, and students involved in the intervention (Creswell, 2015; Creswell & Clark, 2018). This exploratory phase was crucial for understanding the context and environment of the research sites. The selection criteria rely on including those who are the most eager and able to participate in the study; (a) possibly school backgrounds and facilities and teachers' professional position, competency, or experience and (b) purposive sampling which requires several strategic choices about where, how, and with whom the research is conducted (Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Jiao, 2006).

3.8. Study Participants

Initially, four schools were considered for the preliminary phase of context analysis and exploration phase. However, as the study progressed into the second phase, permission was granted by higher levels of administration, leading to the selection of two public schools for participation. This study aims to target history teachers and students from two secondary schools in Shambu Town, specifically tenth-grade students, and has involved participants from one section from each school.

The study involved convenience and purposive sampling, with participants chosen based on their availability and willingness to participate. Convenience sampling involved choosing settings, groups, and individuals that were easily accessible, while purposive sampling involved strategic decisions about research site and methodology (Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Jiao, 2007). The researcher has recruited and collaborated with teachers based on inclusion/exclusion criteria and literature-supported criteria, aiming to foster innovation and joint unit planning. The selection process did not depend on a specific site, and the teacher's selection was not based on age, gender, race/ethnicity, or socio-economic status.

The selection of participating teachers for this study has been guided by specific criteria aimed at ensuring that the educators involved would significantly contribute to the research's objectives. Teachers who have demonstrated effective and positive interactions with their students were prioritized. This cooperation is essential for fostering a supportive learning environment and encouraging student engagement during the intervention. Teachers who have made additional contributions beyond their standard teaching responsibilities were considered. This could include involvement in curriculum development, extracurricular activities, or mentoring other teachers. Teachers who engage in reflective teaching practices—those who regularly assess and adapt their instructional methods based on student feedback and learning outcomes—were targeted. This commitment is crucial for implementing design-based interventions effectively, as it allows teachers to evaluate the impact of new strategies on student learning and their willingness to implement the design-based intervention. Their willingness to embrace new approaches is vital for the success of the design-based research, as it encourages a culture of experimentation and continuous improvement in teaching practices. Finally, the selection of student participants for this study has been designed to be inclusive and straightforward, focusing primarily on their enrollment in history classes taught and proposed by the selected teachers.

The selection of participants and the implementation of the study followed a structured process to ensure the effectiveness of the intervention and the validity of the research findings. During the preliminary data collection and classroom observation phase, two history teachers were identified as promising candidates for the study. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to select two teachers from different secondary schools in Shambu town, along with students from two classes across four secondary schools. The selection process was not randomized; rather, teachers were chosen based on recommendations from administrative staff and colleagues, ensuring their willingness to participate in the study (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007).

The demographic data of the teacher participants, as shown in Table 5, indicated that both were male teachers aged 40–50 with master's degrees in History and extensive teaching experience—21 and 19 years, respectively. Teacher A, a graduate of Dilla and Jimma Universities, was selected based on strong recommendations from colleagues and district supervisors. His

enthusiasm for history teaching and commitment to student engagement made him an ideal candidate for the study. Teacher B, a graduate of Addis Ababa and Jimma Universities, specialized in Ethiopian history and was also recommended by peers and the school director. His ability to connect historical narratives to contemporary issues demonstrated his potential to impact students' critical thinking skills.

Table 6: The demographic data of the Teacher participants

Teachers	Gender	Age range	Qualification	Teaching Experiences
Teacher A	Male	40-50	MA in History	21
Teacher B	Male	40-50	MA in History	19

Table 6 details the student participants, comprising 134 students across the two schools. The student participants were selected to reflect a diverse mix of gender and academic backgrounds, ensuring a representative sample for analyzing the effectiveness of the RLH intervention. Throughout the implementation, teachers were guided by the intervention framework, which involved structured lesson planning, collaborative discussions, and source-based learning activities. The study emphasized teacher engagement, lesson fidelity, and student participation to evaluate the impact of the Reading Like a Historian approach. By closely monitoring the teaching and learning process, the research aimed to assess how the intervention influenced students' historical reasoning and overall academic performance.

Table 7: Demographic data of Student participants of the intervention Classes.

Students	Gender	No	Age range	Total
S/S/P/School D	Male	30	18-20	67
	Female	37		
S/S/S/School F	Male	48	18-20	67
	Female	19		

These two selected teachers have a master's degree in History. The above sections explain in further detail each teacher's background, teacher education experience and school context.

3.9. Instruments for Data Collection

To enable triangulation of the data acquired for this DBR study, the data have been collected using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, depending on the questions posed as described below. Instruments for collecting qualitative data: below is a detail of these.

1. **Interviews:** A list of important questions can be generated by having an interview that is both structured and flexible. As a result, two categories of interview questions have been prepared. One category of interview questions was prepared for history teachers and students for Research questions 1, 2, and 4. The researcher conducted the interview with teachers and students using the prepared or adapted open-ended protocol.

In general, as described under the study design under each phase of DBR, the interviews are carried out and the information obtained has been retained, recorded, and transcribed. It lasts for about 30 to 45 minutes for each interviewee.

2. **Focus Group Discussion (FGD):** the FGD questions were prepared for **History teachers** concerning Research Question 1 (‘*what epistemic stance did history teachers have held toward teaching historical thinking approach and constructivist pedagogy?’*). I have prepared material-based and open-ended writing tasks for assessing narrative competence among students to elicit their belief toward active learning in history classroom. There were ten participants in each focus group, and the focus group interviews took about 30 minutes (Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Jiao, 2006).
3. **Observations:** the observational checklists and guideline questions were prepared and revised following each cycle to assist with design decisions. Throughout the study, observations have been made during analyses of needs and contexts, as well as during classroom instructional interventions. The combination of interviews with classroom observations is advantageous as comparisons of students' responses to the extent of their learning in class can be made, and questions about the content that arose during the course of instruction can be asked.

4. **Questionnaire: instruments used to collect quantitative data include questionnaires** that were used to collect quantitative data. The research involves the replication of questionnaires to gather quantitative data regarding teachers' epistemological beliefs and pedagogical practices in history education. The questionnaire is structured into two main categories aligned with specific research questions.

3.10. Validity and Reliability of Instruments of Data Collection

The formative evaluation phase in Design-Based Research (DBR) is significantly enhanced through Mixed Methods Design-Based Research (MM-DBR), which systematically integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches to capture the complexity of educational interventions (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2023). This methodological synergy addresses DBR's inherent challenges in documenting both contextual specificity and broader applicability (Barab & Squire, 2004), while maintaining rigorous standards of validity and reliability through iterative design cycles (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012). The MM-DBR framework employs triangulation strategies to strengthen internal validity (through multiple data sources and researcher reflexivity) and external validity (via thick descriptions enabling transferability), while construct validity is ensured through alignment between theoretical frameworks and measured outcomes (Nieveen & Folmer, 2013; Tashakkori et al., 2020).

Qualitative components emphasize credibility (through member checking and prolonged engagement), dependability (via audit trails), and confirmability (through researcher positionality statements), while quantitative elements focus on measurement validity (construct, content, criterion) and statistical reliability (Mohajan, 2017). This dual approach allows researchers to navigate DBR's "messiness" by capturing both the process dynamics (through qualitative methods) and outcome patterns (via quantitative measures), particularly valuable when implementing complex interventions like Reading Like a Historian (Alghamdi & Li, 2013). The iterative nature of MM-DBR facilitates continuous refinement of interventions while generating transferable design principles (Design-Based Research Collective, 2003). Ultimately, this integrated methodology produces robust, contextually-grounded knowledge that advances both educational theory and practice.

Epistemological Cognition of Teachers:

This section targets teachers and aims to survey their epistemological beliefs concerning history learning and teaching. The design of this questionnaire is adapted from established instruments in the field, particularly those developed by Maggioni, Alexander, and VanSledright (2004; 2009). Teachers were asked to rank various activities based on their perceived contributions to developing historical thinking concepts among students.

Preparation and Experiences of History Teachers:

The second category addresses Research Question 2, which investigates the preparation and experiences history teachers had with source analysis and historical thinking concepts during their university training. Questions in this section are grounded in literature regarding historical thinking practices, including works by Trombino et al. (2009), Seixas and Morton (2013), and Wineburg (1993; 1998). This part of the questionnaire seeks to understand how teachers apply historical thinking in their teaching practices.

Adaptation of Existing Instruments

The initial questionnaires developed by Trombino et al. (2009) were adapted to ensure they effectively capture the nuances of teachers and students' epistemological beliefs as well as their practical applications in the classroom. This structured approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of both theoretical beliefs and practical experiences in history education, providing valuable insights into how these factors influence teaching practices and student learning outcomes.

3.11**.** Procedures of Data Collection

This study integrates a multifaceted approach to dissect Ethiopia’s history education landscape. Context analysis via literature reviews establishes theoretical grounding, identifying gaps in cognitive rigor and policy-practice alignment. Curricular materials (textbooks, lesson plans) are evaluated through document analyses to assess alignment with Bloom’s Taxonomy and historical

thinking competencies. Teachers' epistemic stances, pedagogical knowledge, and classroom experiences are probed through interviews and focus groups, while observations capture instructional practices in action. Surveys gauge students' historical interest and perceived relevance of content. Synthesizing these components, the framework identifies systemic needs and bridges theory-practice divides, positioning historical thinking and constructivist pedagogy as pillars for curricular redesign. Instruments collectively triangulate data, ensuring a robust, context-sensitive foundation for reform. The procedures of data collection in this study followed a comprehensive, multi-method approach to capture the implementation and impact of the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) intervention in Ethiopian secondary schools. Data were gathered from multiple sources, ensuring a robust and nuanced understanding of both teacher and student experiences.

To begin, teacher interviews and focus groups were conducted using semi-structured protocols. These interviews explored history teachers' instructional practices, professional backgrounds, and epistemological beliefs regarding history teaching. Focus group discussions offered further insight into teachers' perceptions of the RLH approach, as well as the challenges and opportunities encountered during its implementation. This qualitative data provided a foundation for understanding the context in which the RLH intervention was introduced.

Classroom observations constituted another critical data source. Observers systematically documented the fidelity of RLH implementation using structured observation protocols. They tracked seven key components of historical thinking: sourcing (analyzing the author and purpose of documents), contextualization (evaluating historical circumstances), corroboration (cross-verifying sources), close reading (examining textual evidence), perspective recognition, evidence-based argumentation, and historical questioning. These observations helped assess how closely classroom practices aligned with the intended RLH instructional design and identified areas for improvement.

Student learning outcomes were measured through pre- and post-test questionnaires administered before and after the intervention. These validated instruments assessed changes in students' historical thinking competencies, engagement levels, and perceptions of history instruction. In

addition to these questionnaires, students completed constructed response assessments, which were evaluated using the History Assessments of Thinking (HATs) framework. These performance tasks measured students' abilities to analyze primary and secondary sources, construct evidence-based arguments, and synthesize historical narratives, providing a direct measure of historical thinking skills development.

Document analysis further enriched the data set. The study collected lesson plans, student work samples, and various classroom artifacts to provide additional evidence of instructional practices and student learning outcomes. This allowed for triangulation of findings across different data sources and contributed to a comprehensive picture of the intervention's impact.

For data analysis, the study employed a mixed-methods framework, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative analysis included statistical tests such as paired-samples t-tests to determine significant changes in students' historical thinking skills and engagement levels. Normality checks ensured the validity of these tests. Fidelity measures were also quantified, assessing adherence to RLH protocols, frequency and duration of strategy use, quality of delivery, and student engagement. Student constructed responses were scored using both holistic and analytic rubrics, with the former assessing overall historical reasoning and the latter providing detailed ratings on competencies such as source evaluation, contextualization, corroboration, and argumentative writing.

Qualitative data were analyzed through thematic and content analysis. Interview transcripts and observation notes were coded inductively to identify patterns in teachers' instructional approaches and the challenges they faced. Student written responses were examined for evidence of historical thinking skills development. Triangulation was used to validate findings, comparing results from interviews, observations, and assessments to ensure a comprehensive and credible understanding of the intervention's effects.

The implementation analysis was guided by the Design-Based Research (DBR) framework, which unfolded in three iterative phases: analysis and exploration (identifying baseline challenges in history teaching), design and construction (developing and refining RLH lesson

plans based on emerging findings), and evaluation and reflection (assessing intervention effectiveness and generating design principles). This iterative process allowed the intervention to be continually refined in response to real-world classroom dynamics.

Finally, mixed-methods integration was employed to correlate implementation fidelity with learning outcomes, contextualize quantitative results with teachers' experiential reports, and develop a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing the effectiveness of the RLH strategy. This comprehensive approach enabled a robust evaluation of both the processes and outcomes of the intervention, ensuring that the findings were grounded in multiple forms of evidence and reflective of the complex realities of history education reform.

3.12. Ethical Issues

Ethical considerations are always a concern when research involves living people, and since this study is primarily investigating the practices of current teachers, it does include potential risks for human subjects (Herrington, McKenney, Reeves, & Oliver, 2007). When research involves living people, ethical considerations are always a concern, and because this study is primarily investigating the practices of current teachers, it does include potential risks for those people.

The ethical approval process for the study is crucial to ensure that it adheres to the necessary academic and ethical standards. The researcher confirms that this doctoral dissertation in history education has received ethical approval from the Jimma University Institutional Review Board and "DED" doctoral committees, ensuring all human participation procedures adhere to established guidelines. A formal letter has been issued by the History Department to initiate the approval process. This letter outlines the academic purpose of the study, which is critical for transparency and accountability. This step is essential to ensure that all research practices align with ethical guidelines. Permission has been sought from the Shambu Town Education Office. This step is necessary to gain access to educational institutions and ensures that local educational authorities are informed about the research activities. Participants have been informed about the purpose of the study, ensuring they understand its purely academic nature. This includes providing details about how their data will be used and emphasizing that participation is

voluntary. We have agreed that all data collected will be kept confidential. Participants' names will remain anonymous in any reports or communications, protecting their identities and personal information.

By implementing these measures, the researcher demonstrates a strong commitment to ethical research practices. Ensuring confidentiality and obtaining informed consent not only protects participants but also enhances the credibility and reliability of my research findings. This ethical framework fosters a respectful research environment, encouraging honest and open responses from participants, which is vital for achieving meaningful results in this study.

In the context of design-based research, the concept of researcher positionality—particularly as it relates to being an "insider" or "outsider"—is crucial for understanding the dynamics of the research process. My role as a researcher who is also the facilitator as a class teacher places me in a unique position on the insider/outsider continuum, which can lead to both advantages and challenges. The insider/outsider continuum suggests that researchers can occupy various positions based on their relationship to the group being studied as defined by Herr and Anderson (2014).

Conducting a DBR study requires the researcher to select, collate, and analyze vast amounts of data, which can be subject to personal bias. Fact and interpretation are intertwined, and the researcher's context and ideology influence the interpretation of the environment and interactions. However, the triangulation of data and the outlining of philosophical assumptions about disciplinary history can help minimize researcher bias.

3.13. The Positionality of the Researcher

In DBR, the interaction between three key parties: *designers, practitioners, and artefacts* is crucial (Juuti, & Lavonen, 2012, p. 155). For example, researchers collaborate closely with practitioners (e.g., teachers) throughout the research process; act as facilitators who guide teachers through reflective practices; teachers can actively participate in the design process, providing insights based on their classroom experiences. This collaboration ensures that the artefacts developed are relevant and practical for real-world teaching scenarios. The involvement

of teachers as co-researchers allows for a deeper understanding of classroom dynamics and student needs, leading to more effective educational solutions.

In design-based research (DBR), teachers and participants—including students and schools—are considered active collaborators rather than passive subjects (Armstrong, Dopp, & Welsh, 2020). They play a key role as co-participants, contributing not only to the implementation of interventions but also to the design and analysis of the study (Barab & Squire, 2004, p. 3). Unlike traditional research, where interactions are merely observed, DBR requires researchers to actively engineer and refine learning contexts, ensuring that interventions are responsive to real-world classroom dynamics (Barab & Squire, 2004).

In this design-based research (DBR), the role of the researcher can shift over the three core phases from one study component/phase to iterative micro-cycles (Plomp, 2007; Pool, & Laubscher, 2016; Onwuegbuzie, Forzani, & Corrigan, 2023; Tinoca, Piedade, Santos, Pedro, & Gomes, 2022). In other word, design-based educational researchers are grappling with clarifying design research, posing questions about its distinction from design processes, appropriate methods, systematic creation, testing, and dissemination of design interventions, and generating theoretical and practical knowledge for complex educational settings, despite ongoing challenges in understanding this research method (Bannan, 2009).

Within design-based research (DBR), the relationship between the research team is not unidirectional. In this collaborative investigation, research subjects are not merely passive participants; they are active contributors and co-designers in the research process. The role of the research subject is to be available and genuine so that the researcher can make meaningful observations and collect accurate data (Armstrong et al., 2020). This collaborative approach enhances the quality and relevance of the research findings.

In this context, researcher positionality refers to the awareness and acknowledgment of the researcher’s own values, experiences, beliefs, and social identities and how these factors influence the research process. In pragmatic research, this concept is particularly significant as it shapes the study's assumptions, methodologies, and overall outcomes. In terms of positioning

myself within this study, I sought to understand history teachers' conceptions of history, their teaching practices, and students learning in history. It is vital to recognize the influence of the researcher's positionality. This acknowledgment not only enhances the credibility of the study but also enriches the data collection and analysis process.

My academic and professional background in history education directly informs and enriches this study, grounding it in both theoretical rigor and practical insight. My undergraduate degree in History equipped me with foundational skills in historical analysis, critical thinking, and the interpretation of diverse narratives—competencies essential for evaluating sources and constructing evidence-based arguments. Building on this, my Master's degree in History Education deepened my expertise in historiography, historical methodologies, and pedagogical strategies, enabling me to critically engage with the evolving nature of historical interpretation and its implications for classroom practice.

Over 15 years of teaching experience—spanning seven years in secondary schools (Grades 9–12) and eight years in teacher training colleges—has further honed my understanding of the challenges and opportunities inherent in history education. Working with diverse student populations, including Ethiopian learners, has sensitized me to the role of cultural heritage in shaping students' engagement with historical content. For instance, teaching Ethiopian, African, and World history has underscored how local narratives intersect with global frameworks, informing my ability to design inclusive, culturally responsive instructional strategies. This firsthand experience with curriculum development and classroom dynamics allows me to critically assess teachers' pedagogical choices and students' learning trajectories.

In this context, I argue that educational design research begins with a clear identification of the problem, its underlying causes, and potential indicators of resolution (p. 89). The *informed exploration phase* (termed by Bannan-Ritland & Baek, 2014, p. 301) serves as the foundational stage of design-based research (DBR), aiming to systematically investigate and frame the educational problem or phenomenon under study. Researchers should not simply ask practitioners willy-nilly about all the problems they would like to work on solving, and respond accordingly.

Central to this stage is collaboration between researchers and practitioners, ensuring that academic inquiry remains rooted in real-world classroom dynamics. Activities include rigorous literature reviews, field observations, and iterative refinement of research questions. For example, in history education, in this study, it involves analyzing how students engage with learning with multiple sources or identifying disconnects between curricular objectives and instructional practices. Additionally, the phase entails selecting appropriate methods (e.g., mixed-methods approaches), designing data collection instruments (e.g., pre/post-tests, observation, interview protocols), and planning participant engagement strategies (McKenney & Reeves, 2012). By integrating empirical data with theoretical insights, the informed exploration phase bridges abstract scholarship and practical application, setting the stage for iterative design, testing, and refinement in subsequent DBR cycles.

My firsthand experience as a classroom teacher informs a critical aspect of this research: *empathy*—both for educators navigating complex instructional demands and for students whose perspectives we seek to understand. Drawing on Wiggins and McTighe's (2005) definition, empathy involves "the ability to get inside another person's feelings and worldview" (p. 98), a skill honed through years of grappling with the daily realities of teaching. This understanding enables me to engage teachers in candid discussions about their pedagogical choices, recognizing the constraints they face (e.g., curricular pressures, resource limitations) while collaboratively exploring strategies to enhance historical thinking in their classrooms.

Empathy extends beyond interpersonal dynamics to the core of historical inquiry. Yilmaz (2007) defines historical empathy as the ability to interpret past events through the "mentality, frames of reference, and values" of historical agents, avoiding anachronistic judgments (p. 331). This dual lens—personal and disciplinary—shapes my approach to designing interventions. For instance, when analyzing teachers' instructional practices, I consider both their professional challenges (e.g., time constraints, assessment mandates) and their capacity to foster students' empathetic engagement with historical narratives.

My commitment to transform history education pedagogical practices in Ethiopian schools is rooted in this empathetic foundation. By refining teaching strategies that prioritize the integration

of historical content knowledge and historical thinking concepts—such as establishing significance, historical interpretation, evidence-based argumentation and contextual analysis—this research aims to empower teachers as agents of change.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter includes the results of the three phases of the study, followed by the answers to the questions. Context Analysis and Exploration was the first phase, and its goal was to explore challenges of history education in Ethiopia. In this exploratory context analysis, I tried to answer three research questions (1) what epistemic stance did history teachers' have held toward teaching disciplinary history in schools. (2) What kinds of substantive and procedural concepts of historical knowledge are embedded in Grade-10 Secondary schools History Textbooks? (3) What are the conceptions of history teachers' towards the purpose of teaching school history and knowledge of the historical thinking practice in their classrooms? How to Design and Implement the Reading Like a Historian Strategies in the History Classroom? What are the effects of explicit teaching of historical content knowledge and historical thinking concepts using RLH Strategies on Teachers' Pedagogical Practice and Students' Motivation and Engagement?

4.2. History Teachers' Epistemic Stance toward Teaching Disciplinary History

This phase of the study investigates the epistemic stance that history teachers hold regarding the teaching of disciplinary history in schools. Traditionally, history instruction has relied on textbooks, lectures, and rote memorization, often limiting students' ability to critically engage with historical content knowledge, historical thinking concepts, and develop analytical skills. By exploring teachers' perspectives on historical content knowledge and its construction, this study seeks to understand how their epistemic beliefs influence instructional practices. Table 8 presents teachers' responses, focusing on historical knowledge, historical reasoning, and criteria for evaluating sources.

Table 8: Teachers' Responses to BHQ

Categories	Items	No	Mean score	Std. Deviation
Copier or objectivist	Disagreement about the same event in the past is always due to lack of evidence.	15	3.47	1.727
	Good general reading and comprehension skills are enough to learn history well.	15	2.73	1.710
	The facts speak for themselves.	15	4.00	1.732
	Even eyewitnesses do not always agree with each other, so there is no way to know what happened.	15	2.40	1.352
	Teachers should not question students' historical opinions, only check that they know the facts.	15	3.47	1.685
	History is simply a matter of interpretation.	15	2.27	1.831
Borrower or subjectivist	Students who read many history books learn that the past is what the historian makes it to be.	15	3.47	1.407
	Good students know that history is basically a matter of opinion.	15	3.00	1.964
	Historical claims cannot be justified, since they are simply a matter of interpretation.	15	3.07	1.624
	Since there is no way to know what really happened in the past, students can believe whatever story they choose.	15	2.00	1.254
	The past is what the historian makes it to be.	15	2.93	1.580
	It is impossible to know anything for sure about the past, since no one of us was there.	15	2.20	1.373
	Students need to be aware that history is essentially a matter of interpretation.	15	3.60	1.404
	There is no evidence in history	15	1.87	1.407
Criterialist	It is fundamental that students are taught to support	15	4.53	1.506

	their reasoning with evidence.			
	A historical account is the product of a disciplined method of inquiry.	15	4.53	1.642
	Students need to be taught to deal with conflicting evidence.	15	3.47	1.885
	History is a critical inquiry about the past.	15	4.73	1.100
	Comparing sources and understanding author perspectives are essential components of the process of learning history.	15	4.73	1.534
	Knowledge of the historical method is fundamental for historians and students alike.	15	4.00	1.852
	Reasonable accounts can be constructed even in the presence of conflicting evidence.	15	4.00	1.648
	History is the reasonable reconstruction of past occurrences based on the available evidence.	15	5.20	1.474

The first analysis of the interview results provides critical insights into Ethiopian history teachers' conceptions of history and historical thinking, revealing gaps in both knowledge and pedagogical practice. This finding is particularly relevant, as historical thinking is essential for transforming history education by fostering analytical reasoning and interpretation skills (Seixas, 2017; Maggioni, 2010). When asked about the purpose of history education, teachers emphasized critical thinking, understanding societal development, and cultural appreciation. However, their instructional methods did not consistently align with practices that develop historical thinking, such as using primary sources, analyzing cause and consequence, and evaluating historical perspectives (Seixas & Morton, 2013).

Teachers also identified several barriers to student engagement with history, including a reliance on rote memorization, outdated curricula, and a perception that history lacks relevance. Many teachers acknowledged that making history more interactive—by incorporating technology, connecting historical events to current issues, and fostering discussions with multiple perspectives—could improve student motivation. These insights align with the Ethiopian

General Education Curriculum Framework (2020), which advocates for student-centered, inquiry-based learning approaches to make history more engaging and meaningful. Nonetheless, many teachers still rely on conventional, teacher-centered methodologies, contributing to the perception of history as a boring subject (Talin, 2014).

Furthermore, the study also revealed that teachers primarily rely on textbooks as their main instructional resource, reinforcing a traditional, fact-based approach to history education. More than 90% of the respondents reported using approved textbooks as their primary teaching tool, often without integrating other historical sources or inquiry-based learning activities. This reliance on textbooks limits students' exposure to diverse perspectives and critical engagement with historical narratives. Furthermore, many teachers believed their role was to ensure students memorized historical facts rather than encouraging debate, analysis, or the reconstruction of past events based on evidence.

The second survey findings indicate that the level of consistency of teacher responses varies across the three epistemic stances. These results generally indicate that the *criterialist* beliefs ranked higher followed by *subjectivist*. However, the results of the *copier* or *Objectivist* items were not in line with theoretical expectations. The study categorized teachers' epistemic stances into three main perspectives: objectivist (copier), subjectivist (borrower), and criterialist. While the criterialist stance—emphasizing historical inquiry, critical thinking, and evidence-based reasoning—is favored in modern history education, the findings suggest that many teachers still hold objectivist or subjectivist views, limiting their ability to foster deep historical understanding among students.

The findings from the participant teachers' responses to the Beliefs about History Questionnaire (BHQ) indicate significant misunderstandings in differentiating between copier, subjectivist, and criterialist stances. The objectivist scale results, in particular, highlight epistemological misconceptions that may hinder critical historical thinking.

Key areas of concern include the belief that "Disagreement about the same event in the past is always due to lack of evidence" (M = 3.47), suggesting a limited understanding of historical

interpretation and Multiperspectivity. Similarly, the statement "The facts speak for themselves" (M = 4.00) reflects a naïve realist perspective, with a majority of teachers endorsing an overly simplistic view of history as a discipline. This approach risks neglecting the interpretative and constructed nature of historical knowledge.

Additionally, the response to "Teachers should not question students' historical opinions, but only check whether they know the historical facts" (M = 3.47) points to a reliance on traditional, fact-based instruction. This approach, shaped by prior experiences, limits the development of students' critical thinking and deeper engagement with history. Overall, these findings underscore the need for targeted interventions to enhance teachers' understanding of history as an interpretive and analytical discipline.

4.3. An Assessment Tasks and Learning Outcomes in Grade 10 History Curricular Materials.

The study analyzed the assessment techniques and learning outcomes in Ethiopia's Grade 10 History textbook through the lens of Bloom's Taxonomy. The findings revealed that the majority of the learning objectives and assessment activities primarily emphasize lower-order thinking skills, such as remembering, understanding, and applying. The analysis of assessment tasks in the Grade 10 History Textbook reveals a pronounced emphasis on **lower-order thinking skills (LOTS)** (Table 1). Multiple-choice (32%) and short-answer questions (34%) dominate, collectively constituting 66% of all tasks. These formats prioritize factual recall (e.g., *"When did the Battle of Adwa occur?"*) over analytical engagement, aligning with critiques of Ethiopian history education as overly reliant on rote memorization (Kemisso, 2009). True/false questions (8.7%) further reinforce this trend, offering limited scope for critical reasoning.

While discussion/essay tasks (14.3%) suggest opportunities for deeper analysis, their framing often narrows to descriptive prompts (e.g., *"Explain the causes of the Italo-Ethiopian War"*) rather than open-ended inquiries. Performance tasks (3.5%), such as creating timelines or maps, are rare and lack scaffolding for historical argumentation. Notably, **document-based questions (DBQs)**—a cornerstone of historical thinking—are entirely absent, depriving students of

opportunities to analyze primary sources, corroborate evidence, or challenge narratives (Wineburg, 2001).

Assessment Techniques

Table 9: summarizes assessment task distribution:

Assessment Technique	**Frequency (%)**
Multiple-choice	92 (32%)
Short-answer	99 (34%)
True/False	25 (8.7%)
Discussion/Essay	41 (14.3%)
Performance tasks	10 (3.5%)
Document-based questions (DBQs)	0 (0%)

Lower-order tasks dominated (74.7%), while HOTS-focused activities (e.g., debates, source analysis) were scarce. This imbalance reflects a systemic issue: assessments prioritize efficiency (e.g., ease of grading) over pedagogical depths, contradicting Ethiopia's *General Education Curriculum Framework* (MoE, 2020), which mandates competency-based learning.

Cognitive Levels of Learning Outcomes

Bloom's Taxonomy analysis of 156 learning Outcomes underscores a moderate emphasis on higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) (46.8%), though with critical limitations (Table 10).

Table 10: Cognitive Level Frequency Percentage across Bloom's Taxonomy:

Cognitive Level	**Frequency (%)**
Remembering	15 (9.6%)
Understanding	54 (34.6%)
Applying	14 (9.0%)

Cognitive Level	Frequency (%)
Analyzing	33 (21.1%)
Evaluating	36 (23.1%)
Creating	4 (2.6%)

LOTS constituted 53.2% of learning outcomes, with "understanding" being most frequent (34.6%). HOTS accounted for 46.8%, dominated by "evaluating" (23.1%). This suggests a predominant focus on factual recall and conceptual understanding rather than fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Alignment

The Congruence between Learning Outcomes and Assessment Tasks

Only 38% of assessment tasks aligned with HOTS objectives, reflecting a mismatch between policy mandates and textbook design. Webb's (2007) Depth of Knowledge (DOK) model highlights significant misalignment: Categorical Concurrence: only 38% of HOTS objectives are assessed through corresponding tasks. Most *evaluating* verbs are paired with LOTS assessments (e.g., multiple-choice questions). Depth of Knowledge Consistency: tasks rarely progress beyond DOK Level 2 (skills/concepts), with no evidence of Level 3 (strategic thinking) or Level 4 (extended reasoning). Balance of Representation: LOTS assessments (74.7%) outweigh HOTS (25.3%), contradicting the *National Curriculum Framework*'s emphasis on critical thinking (MoE, 2020).

This indicates a misalignment between the intended educational outcomes and the assessment techniques in the textbook. While the Ethiopian General Education Curriculum Framework envisions outcome-based learning that integrates 21st-century skills, the actual assessment structure within the history textbook does not effectively support these goals. The predominance of lower-order questions suggests that students are not being sufficiently challenged to develop skills such as critical thinking, interpretation, and historical argumentation.

The findings highlight the need for a more competency-based approach in history education. The study recommends integrating inquiry-based learning, using multiple sources, and encouraging students to engage in critical discussion and interpretation of historical events. It also suggests revising assessment strategies to include more open-ended and analytical tasks, which can better prepare students for complex reasoning and informed decision-making in the modern world.

4.4. History Teachers' Preparedness for Teaching School History and Implementing Historical Thinking Practices in the Classroom

This study employed an exploratory sequential mixed-method approach to examine history teachers' perceptions, preparation, and instructional practices regarding historical thinking concepts. The first phase involved qualitative data collection through semi-structured interviews, followed by thematic analysis to identify key themes related to sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, and close reading. In the second phase, a questionnaire survey quantitatively assessed teachers' professional development in content and methodology courses on historical thinking concepts. This design integrated qualitative insights with quantitative validation.

The study included 16 history teachers (14 males, 2 females) from four secondary schools in Shambu town, selected through convenience sampling. Ten teachers participated in interviews based on personal interest, while 15 completed the survey questionnaire (see Table 6). The qualitative phase explored teachers' perceptions of history education goals and instructional practices. A Historical Thinking Skills (HTS) Questionnaire, adapted from Trombino (2010), was used to assess academic backgrounds and experiences. Developed from works by Seixas, Morton, and Wineburg, the questionnaire comprised nine scales evaluating elements such as sourcing, corroboration, contextualization, and explicit instructional strategies across content and methodology courses. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 25, with responses collected on a 5-point Likert scale, where teachers indicated agreement or disagreement with statements.

Table 11: Comparison of Mean Scores for HTS in Contents and Methods Courses

Categories	N*	Items	contents	methods

Sourcing	15	10	3.172	3.039
Contextualization and Corroboration	15	10	3.24	3.22
Explicit	15	10	3.287	3.28

*N-Number of respondents

Table 11 shows teachers rarely experience explicit instruction in content and methods courses, with the lowest mean score for explicit instruction. However, they occasionally experience sourcing, corroboration, contextualization, and explicit instruction in college courses. As shown in the table, the lowest mean scale score was found for explicit instruction in content and methods courses. The highest mean scale score was observed for corroboration and contextualization (M = 3.24) and explicit instruction (3.28) in content and methods courses. Teachers reported that they sometimes experienced sourcing, corroboration and contextualization and explicit instruction in college courses. **Table 12** provides further insight into the participants' practices in utilizing historical thinking skills in their classrooms. To what extent do teachers practice historical thinking skills in their classroom?

Table 12: Explicit instruction of HTS

Categories	N*	Items	Mean
Sourcing	15	5	3.07
Contextualization and Corroboration	15	5	2.94
Explicit	15	5	2.90
Total mean	15	15	2.92

*N-number of respondents

The HTSQ consists of 15 items addressing classroom use of HTS, with mean scores ranging from 3.07 to 2.90. The highest mean score was for sourcing, followed by corroboration and contextualization, and the lowest for explicit instruction. Teachers reported occasionally using these tools in their classrooms. As shown in Table **11** contains the mean scale scores for classroom use of HTS. The highest mean score was reported for Sourcing (M = 3.07), followed

by corroboration and contextualization (M= 2.94). The lowest mean score occurred for the explicit instruction scale (M= 2.90). The results indicated that teachers reported that they *sometimes* use sourcing, corroboration and contextualization, and explicit instruction in their classrooms.

The study explored the preparedness of history teachers in teaching historical thinking skills and their understanding of the purpose of history education in schools. The findings from the semi-structured interviews reveal a varied understanding among history teachers regarding the nature and purpose of history education. Many teachers still perceive history as a discipline focused on recounting past events, with some equating it to an identity-forming tool, while others highlight its role in understanding the past to inform the present and future. Notably, only a few teachers acknowledged the interpretative nature of history, emphasizing the need for analysis and source-based inquiry. When defining historical thinking, responses varied, with some teachers linking it to fact-based study and others recognizing its procedural and analytical dimensions.

Regarding the goals of history teaching, most teachers prioritized knowledge acquisition over skills development, with only a few mentioning historical thinking or inquiry-based learning. This suggests that despite curricular reforms advocating competency-based learning, traditional content-heavy approaches still dominate. The findings also indicate a strong reliance on textbooks, with limited use of primary sources, historical fiction, or interactive resources. Teachers identified rigid curricula, dense textbooks, and language difficulties as key barriers to student engagement, while suggesting that diverse teaching methods, interactive activities, and visual aids could enhance student interest. Effective history teaching, as described by the respondents, involves structured lesson planning, fostering student inquiry, and incorporating critical analysis of historical sources. However, many still emphasized content delivery over skill-building, pointing to a gap between policy recommendations and classroom practices.

The findings reveal that while teachers acknowledge the importance of history, their approach remains largely traditional, emphasizing content coverage, memorization of facts, and national narratives rather than fostering historical thinking skills such as sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration. Teachers often equate history with identity and nation-building, rather than

viewing it as an interpretive discipline that encourages inquiry and evidence-based reasoning. This reflects a gap between curriculum goals, which emphasize competency-based learning and multiple historical perspectives, and actual classroom practices.

The finding of the quantitative survey found that teachers had limited exposure to historical thinking skills during their university training. Table 11 shows that teachers rarely received explicit instruction in content and methodology courses, with the lowest mean score for explicit instruction (M = 3.28). While sourcing, corroboration, and contextualization were somewhat present in their academic training, explicit instruction in historical thinking was lacking, making it difficult for teachers to translate these skills into classroom practice. Table 11 further highlights this issue, showing that the mean score for classroom use of explicit instruction was only 2.90, indicating that teachers seldom engage students in activities requiring deep historical analysis. These findings highlight the need for further professional development to bridge the gap between traditional content-focused instruction and contemporary historical thinking approaches.

Additionally, the study revealed that history teachers heavily rely on textbooks, with over 90% using them as their primary instructional material. Other resources, such as primary source documents, historical fiction, and museums, were rarely utilized, limiting students' exposure to diverse historical interpretations. Teachers cited curriculum constraints, content overload, and rigid teaching methods as barriers to making history engaging for students. They also pointed to the difficulty of teaching history in a way that encourages student inquiry and critical thinking, often due to a lack of professional development opportunities focusing on history-specific pedagogy.

4.5. Designing and Implementing the Reading Like a Historian Strategies in the History Classroom

The pre-intervention interviews with the two participating history teachers revealed several key insights regarding their preparedness, challenges, and instructional strategies in implementing the Reading Like a Historian approach. The success of any history curriculum intervention largely

depends on teachers' perspectives on history education and their pedagogical practices (Kropman et al., 2021). Through the interviews, it became evident that while both teachers demonstrated a commitment to enhancing historical thinking in students, they also faced significant obstacles such as time constraints and the lack of readily available historical materials. These factors posed a challenge to integrating the intervention lesson plan into their instruction effectively. To address these gaps, the intervention incorporated primary and secondary sources, digital historical resources, and Ethiopia's Grade 10 History textbook to enrich the instructional content.

The use of semi-structured interviews, supplemented by the CoRes (Content Representations) and PaP-eR (Pedagogical and Professional-experience Repertoire) instruments (Loughran, Berry, & Mulhall, 2006, as cited in Tuithof et al., 2023), allowed for a deeper analysis of the teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and instructional planning. These tools have been widely used to capture and articulate teachers' expertise in science education (Bertram, 2012), though their application to history teaching remains limited, particularly in the Ethiopian context.

This study adapted a CoRe questionnaire from previous PCK research in history education (Kropman et al., 2021; Tuithof et al., 2023; Bertram & Loughran, 2012; Van den Akker, 2010) to explore the teachers' instructional strategies, lesson designs, and knowledge of historical content. Participants were asked to answer twelve questions, which guided them through the design process and were offered to them as a blank template in table format (see Appendix H).

The CoRe questionnaire guided teachers through twelve reflective questions on the topic of Long-Distance Trade in 19th-Century Ethiopia (Appendix H). Teachers are expected to provide responses regarding their instructional goals, expected student difficulties, lesson activities, material selection, and assessment strategies. Their responses indicated a strong emphasis on fostering historical inquiry, though they also highlighted concerns about students' ability to critically analyze primary sources. The analysis of their answers showed that their lesson plans were structured around a mix of direct instruction and student-centered activities, including document analysis and class discussions. However, both teachers expressed concerns about the limited availability of historical resources and the challenges of aligning the intervention with existing curricular constraints (See Appendix C).

The selected unit for intervention in this study pertains to the tenth-grade Ethiopian history curriculum. It is important to note that history education in Ethiopia encompasses ancient, medieval, and modern perspectives and discussions. For this research, I have opted for *Unit 3: Social, Economic, and Political Developments in Ethiopia from the mid-19th century to 1941*. This unit was chosen because of the collaborative effort involved in developing the instructional materials and the readiness of Teacher A' and Teacher B' to integrate my proposed teaching solution into their practice during the second phase of design-based research, known as 'design and construction'. This phase focuses on creating a lesson plan that fosters historical thinking concepts, specifically through the Reading Like a Historian approach.

For history teachers passionate about teaching, engaging with students, and imparting knowledge of history, secondary education classrooms are only one pathway to obtain competent students to advance in social sciences and humanities ultimately entering the profession of historians. Ethiopia has been working towards improvement in educational provisions to enable students' analytical, critical, reflective, logical thinkers, etc. (MoE, 2020, p. 29). In pursuit of this goal, the intervention uses the Reading Like a Historian model, developed by Stanford History Education Group (See Appendix A).

Designing Learning Activities to Stimulate Historical Thinking and Reasoning

The lessons discussed provide examples of how to foster historical thinking concepts among students, emphasizing key skills like causality, chronology, multiple perspectives, contingency, empathy, change, and source work as organizing concepts to teaching history. Understanding Reading Like a Historian as a methodology of history teaching can better facilitate students' historical contents and historical thinking skills. Adding reading like a historian and historical thinking to the curriculum deepens students' understanding of specific historical content while simultaneously reinforcing the thinking skills necessary for them to compete in the modern world. Textbooks can be used to spur the investigation of a key historical question or to provide context before an investigation (Bain 2006; Martin and Monte-Sano 2008; Martin, 2008). Treat the textbook as just another piece of historical evidence and move on.

Directions when planning Reading Like a Historian learning activities, we have to consider the types of activities students will need to engage in, in order to develop the competencies and knowledge aimed at. In this textbook-driven instruction, constructive alignment is the key to a coherent activity or lesson. Constructivist learning theory prefers assessment methods that support student learning instead of the traditional assessment approach. This approach can be defined as assessments meant for both learning and the learners involved. Learning activities should be directly related and aligned to the learning competencies, and provide experiences that will enable students to engage in, practice, and gain feedback on progress towards those learning outcomes. Think about a starter to introduce the focus question and learning goals, and to obtain students' attention. For example, using an image, story, or news item that raises questions, disbelief, indignation or curiosity. Also, take sufficient time for closure. This can be done by a whole-class discussion in which students share their findings or arguments, or by formative assessment techniques. Both formative and summative assessment should align with learning objectives and activities. As you plan learning activities, estimate how much time you will spend on each and take into account the time needed for explanation or discussion.

In this brief activity, students are asked to consider multiple historical perspectives on the process of *Making Modern Ethiopian History* and the events which have shaped the Modern Ethiopian State during 1855-1913. This lesson will facilitate student proficiency in *historical interpretation and analysis*, analyzing *cause and consequence; chronological reasoning*; *identifying continuity and change* one of Seixas' historical thinking competencies (Seixas & Morton, 2013; Smith, & Breakstone, 2015). To help students to understand that there are short-term and long-term consequences of events. To help students understand and assess the varying importance of causes.

Selection and working with Sources (digital sources)

Especially when looking for sources that relate to a very specific topic, open access scientific articles or book chapters by specialized historians are useful. Historical sources are subjected to an in-depth critical analysis, allowing students to gain insight in the role sources play in interpreting and constructing historical knowledge. There are several considerations when

choosing appropriate sources. First, sources must provide information that really fits the focus question. Second, sources with details about concrete persons and actions support historical imagination and interest. Third, understanding historical sources requires historical contextualization. A textbook text, documentary or (self-written) summary may be helpful to provide students with background information. Fourth, one has to be aware that sources are likely to include only the perspectives of those in power. Therefore, you should always check whether the chosen sources do justice to different experiences and perspectives. Students should be organized into groups of five to six members to discuss their inquiry task.

The two history teachers at the intervention schools received instruction to incorporate reading and writing exercises using a variety of historical source materials. In this study, the decision to utilize a variety of educational resources reflects a comprehensive approach to teaching Ethiopian history, particularly given the limited accessibility of primary sources in both traditional and web-based formats. This study utilizes teachers' handouts, history textbooks, secondary sources, videos, charts, online resources, printed documents, and a video tutorial lecture on Ethiopia from 19th Century to 1941, created by Dechasa Abebe (PhD), intended for secondary school teachers and students since we face a limited primary sources that are accessible in both traditional classroom-based and web-based formats in Ethiopian context.

Lesson Procedures and Scaffolding Techniques:

The teacher can also give explicit instruction about a historical thinking or reasoning heuristic or strategy. For example, about how to construct an explanation, criteria that can be used to attribute historical significance or how to critically evaluate the trustworthiness of sources. This can be done by modelling or using examples.

When students analyze multiple sources to answer a given question, pre-writing organizers might be helpful to organize information, such as causal maps. Finally, teachers can inform students about the assessment criteria, for example, criteria used to evaluate the quality of a written historical argument. Reading Like a Historian Lesson involves a set of procedures and scaffolding strategies that encourage historical and critical thinking, analysis, and interpretation

of historical texts. Students only learn from inquiry-based learning activities, when they are adequately supported, tailored to what they need. Here are some key steps and strategies teachers can use to teach students this approach:

Eliciting student's prior knowledge (Warmup): Teachers tapping into eliciting students prior knowledge and distinguishing misconceptions among students**.** Teachers will introduce the learning outcomes and review the student's prior knowledge about the topic under discussion. Establishing students' background knowledge with mini lectures on the lesson of the Day. Provide background information about the period, key events, and significant figures to establish students' background knowledge. Teachers can provide the background context to students in the form of a lecture, slides presentation, or reading. Activate instruction by linking to and activating relevant prior knowledge.

Posing the lesson central historical questions: Asking historical questions is where the first journey of RLH Lesson Plan truly begins with transforming learning competencies into compelling questions. Pose the lesson central questions to students and tell them at the end of this lesson they should know the answer to those questions:

Orienting Students: We are going to analyze several primary and secondary resources, and as a class, I would like you to compile the information on a class shared document, for example, on the first question "the causes, process and impacts of unification and subjugation during Tewedros II, Yohannis IV and Menelik II" Show evidence for your conclusions.

Interacting with sources: The two history teachers are expected to teach students to source, contextualize, and corroborate, to recognize claims and evidence in historical texts, looking for a source's interpretation of the relationship among events and their significance, and to use textual evidence in their own writing. They are also helping their students understand that reading historical texts closely in this new way—as historians do—requires a level of engagement and persistence they may not have previously applied to their reading of history, but that provides greater rewards. Both teachers have reported high levels of engagement with the reading and writing tasks.

Subsequently, inform their students how to apply the *Reading Like a Historian* strategies—Sourcing, Contextualization, Corroboration, and Close Reading—while engaging with various sources. The teacher should provide guidance on how to apply the RLH heuristics when analyzing multiple historical documents. Students will be directed to move to their designated corners, where they will engage in a Think-Pair-Share activity, collaboratively reading at least from two historical texts. They should annotate or take notes on the provided student activity sheet (Appendix F). Students can use sentence starters to cite their evidence from a Historical Thinking Chart posted in their classroom.

Reflection and Assessment Options: The design of assessments aimed at evaluating historical thinking encounters several notable challenges. A primary issue lies in the often-ambiguous distinction between what has been referred to as historical "content," which encompasses the declarative knowledge of past events, individuals, and locations, and the concept of historical thinking itself. For example, conducting an analysis of historical causation necessitates a comprehension of the individuals, circumstances, and events at play. One potential solution is to incorporate the requisite information as part of the assessment framework. Alternatively, one could acknowledge the interdependence of knowledge and thinking, thereby moving away from the artificial separation of historical thinking from content (Ercikan, Seixas, Kaliski, & Huff, 2016).

After a few minutes, the teacher takes control and calls up on the pairs to read the answers they have written down demonstrating their historical knowledge in front of the whole class one by one. Teacher writes them on the board the answers of each group, so everyone can see them. Once all groups have shared, the teacher will go over the similarities and differences. As students share, it might be helpful for teachers to jot the major details for each source on the board. They can bring forward all kinds of arguments and the teacher will correct them or elaborate on the answers given. By using these procedures and scaffolding strategies, educators can foster a deeper understanding of historical texts and help students learn to Read Like a Historian Lesson ultimately enhancing their critical thinking and analytical skills.

In two to three sentences, students as a group or independently have expected to summarize their response to the lesson question(s). Teachers should circulate among groups to check in, clarify, celebrate, or redirect as they finish their assigned tasks in groups or independently. Invite students to highlight their assessment with one or two peers. Once learning activities are complete, provide time to set up a gallery walk for students to see each other's work. Students can share one takeaway from this lesson activity as a final reflection.

Dialogue, Argumentation and Communication: finally, allow students to share their final assigned learning activities considering the established expectations for group work (e.g., rubrics adapted to examine students' RLH strategies, evidence-based claims, historical argumentation rubric, whole-class discussion, etc.) and making explicit connections (e.g., Reading Like a Historian strategies in the history classroom).

The focus on only one or two fundamental historical thinking concepts in any given assessment allows teachers to gain an understanding of the level of their students' historical understanding. Using the assessments in a formative way provides a scaffold for students' to build historical skills and competencies through shorter, more frequent assessments. Equally important is the ability of the teacher to identify the particular skill (s) with which students are struggling over the course of the school year.

Implementation Phase

The implementation was conducted over 14 days (7 weeks) during the first semester of the Ethiopian school year (December to February). Fourteen (14) periods were used to engage students in the *Reading Like a Historian Lesson* within six-weeks intervention. State curricula, 40-minute periods, and textbooks shape and constrain what teachers do. Students received 40 min of instruction, two times a week, and 80 min of instruction once a week. A total of 560-minutes were taught across the Seven- weeks. We also created excerpted documents for ***The Making of Modern Ethiopian State 1855-1913*** units based on primary and secondary sources (See Appendix D).

During classroom practice teachers' are expected to ask the historical questions to elicit students' previous knowledge and misconceptions about the topic. By adopting the RLH lesson model as a constructivist approach to teaching history, teachers' can create an active and participatory learning environment that values student input and diverse perspectives. The teacher's role as a collaborator and facilitator is crucial in guiding students through historical inquiry while maximizing available resources. This method not only enhances students' understanding of historical content but also equips them with essential skills for critical thinking and analysis, fostering a deeper appreciation for history as a dynamic field of study.

Week One –Day One and Two (2 periods): The intervention has carried out over Seven (7) weeks began in the last week of December and concluded in the first week of February 2016 of Ethiopian school year. The unit on ***Social, Economic and Political Developments in Ethiopia mid 19thC. To 1941*** prescribed to last for fourteen (14) periods of class meetings (see Appendix E: outlines of the unit).

The first lesson on day One was the "**Long Distance Trade in 19th Century Ethiopia."** The key competencies of the lesson is to *highlight* the key characteristics of long-distance trade in Ethiopia; *identify* the key handicraft or cottage industries in Ethiopia; *recognize* the significant contributions of the cottage industry to the socio-economic wellbeing of Ethiopian society. Substantive content themes of the lesson includes the Trade Routes, People's Interaction, Major Market places, the Medium of Exchange, and Trade Items, the Role of Cottage industries in Ethiopia by eliciting their prior Knowledge. Asking historical questions to drive text-based discussions with introducing the topic of the day and asking students to be in small groups, discuss and see how many of them are familiar with the following concepts:- the long-distance trade, trade routes, trade items. In this brief activity, students completed diverse activities and related them to historical content.

The guiding historical question for students to visit local craftsmen and report on their observations is designed to deepen their understanding of history by examining the complexities of craftsmanship and its societal implications. This activity encourages students to consider the role of craftsmen in technological and industrial development, as well as their treatment in local

contexts. The questions posed while discussing using the Reading Like a Historian Lesson plan are primarily text dependent and designed to construct opportunities to examine the text rather than simply draw on previous experiences that do little to forward new learning. This enables students to track their performance and address their continuous learning requirements.

Second Week, Day 1, 2 and Third Week, Day 1 (3 periods): *The Making of Modern Ethiopian State 1855-1913***.** Under the main content, there are sub-topics to be covered particularly the move towards administrative centralization: administrative reforms; modernization attempts; and religious reforms, 1855-1913; People's reactions against Imperial Expansion, 1855-1913; Salient features of the land tenure system in the north and the south during the successive regimes. The same process has followed for the remaining topics of the unit of intervention (See Appendix E). Two key instruments were used: (1) a checklist to track RLH (Reading Like a Historian) lesson implementation, and (2) a mean score tracker assessing seven instructional categories on a 4-point Likert scale (see Appendix I).

Observations of Teachers' Implementation of Reading Like a Historian Lesson

Observations conducted during the first semester of the Ethiopian school year, specifically from the last week of December to mid-February, spanned approximately seven weeks, totaling 14 days of instruction. During this period, Grade 10 history teachers were expected to complete the unit titled "Social, Economic, and Political Developments in Ethiopia from the mid-19th century to 1941" as outlined in their annual lesson plans. Classes met two times weekly for approximately 80 minutes every other day.

Each class was observed during fourteen (14) consecutive class sessions over a seven-week period. A total of 560 minutes have been spent in each classroom with more than 18 hours of observations across the two intervention teachers. The researcher observed intervention teachers each lesson twice per week using fidelity of implementation data to inform the teachers' efforts and learn more about the underlying aspects of the instructional intervention. The study aimed to assess the implementation of Reading Like a Historian lesson by developing observation

protocols for coding constructs. The results helped evaluate the effects of different levels of fidelity, with scores representing the percentage of important constructs identified in each lesson.

On non-classroom observation days, discussions with teachers are held to prepare for the next lessons, collect intervention teachers' impressions, experiences, and have face-to-face meetings after each lesson to monitor progress and identify areas for improvement. This ensures continuous refinement and improvement of the instructional lesson.

Below is a table 13 showing the mean and standard deviation for each of the seven RLH lesson activity categories, separately for Teacher A (Teacher A) and Teacher B (Teacher B), based on the 14 lesson Observations. The values are derived from a four-point Likert scale.

Table 13: Mean and Standard Deviation of Teacher Ratings across 14 Lesson observations

Activity	Teacher A		Teacher B	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Activating students' prior knowledge	2.43	1.28	2.29	1.14
Communicating learning outcomes	2.14	1.17	2.36	1.15
Asking historical questions	2.79	0.89	2.36	1.15
Using sources & presenting perspectives	1.93	0.73	2.14	0.86
Applying RLH strategies	2.57	0.76	2.43	1.02
Engaging students in tasks/assignments	2.71	0.91	2.43	0.94
Facilitating whole-class discussions	2.14	0.77	2.07	0.83
Overall	**2.39**	**0.28**	**2.30**	**0.39**

The analysis of lesson observations revealed distinct strengths and areas for growth for both teachers across seven categories of RLH lesson activities. Among the highest-rated categories, Teacher A excelled in asking historical questions, achieving a mean score of 2.79, and engaging students in tasks and assignments, with a mean of 2.71. Similarly, Teacher B demonstrated strengths in asking historical questions and communicating learning outcomes, both with a mean score of 2.36. These results suggest that both teachers prioritize inquiry and clarity in their instructional approaches.

Conversely, both teachers scored lowest in "Using sources & presenting multiple perspectives" (Teacher A = 1.93, Teacher B = 2.14). This indicates a shared challenge in effectively integrating historical sources and diverse viewpoints into their lessons, highlighting a critical area for professional development suggesting a need for improvement in integrating historical sources and diverse viewpoints.

Regarding consistency, Teacher A exhibited higher variability in activating prior knowledge, as reflected by a standard deviation of 1.28, suggesting inconsistency in this instructional practice across lessons. In contrast, Teacher B had relatively consistent scores across most categories, with the highest variability in *"Applying RLH strategies"* (SD = 1.02).

Overall, both teachers performed at a moderate level, with Teacher A slightly outperforming Teacher B in most categories. The weakest area for both remains the use of historical sources and presentation of multiple perspectives, underscoring the need for targeted support to enhance these aspects of teaching. This analysis provides valuable insights into their instructional strengths and areas requiring improvement, guiding future professional development efforts.

Results of Pre-Test and Post-Test Questionnaire

The researcher used 58 paper-based questionnaires to assess students' motivation and engagements. The questionnaires focused on students' epistemological beliefs about learning history, understanding the sources of historical knowledge, teaching approaches used, and the construction of narratives. The study also examined students' perceptions of history textbooks, teachers' pedagogy, historical reading skills, and short essay historical writing questions (see Appendix G).

To assess the effectiveness of the six-week instructional design intervention using the Reading Like a Historian lesson, a paired-samples t-test was conducted. This statistical method was used to determine whether there was a significant difference in students' pre-test and post-test scores. Paired sample t-tests, also known as *repeated measures t-tests*, are a statistical method used to determine whether there is a significant difference between the means of two related groups.

This test is particularly useful in scenarios where the same subjects are measured at two different points in time or under two different conditions (Pallant, 2010, p. 243).

Before conducting a paired sample t-test, parametric assumption of normality of the paired t-test was assessed using normality tests analytically and graphically. For analytical tests to check data for normal distribution, *Skewness and kurtosis*, where the actually observed distribution is compared with the theoretically expected distribution.

For graphical verification, a histogram and the Q-Q plot available in SPSS using the Explore option of the Descriptive Statistics menu is used (Pallant, 2010, p.59). The survey focuses on students' epistemological views on history and their motivation to learn it; the essence of history textbooks from students' perspectives; the skills of using history textbooks, teachers' instructional methods, and students' engagement in history classroom are presented in Table 14.

Table 14: Pre-Test and Post-Test Results of Students' (N=134)

Aspect	N	Conditions	Mean	SD	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Students' epistemological views and motivation toward history	**134**	**Pre-test**	**2.3857**	**.33640**	**-.65960**	**-.51234**	**-15.741**	**133**	**.000**
		Post-test	**2.9716**	**.36063**					
Students' Perceptions and Use of History Textbooks	**134**	**Pre-test**	**2.4981**	**.30989**	**-.36211**	**-.25371**	**-11.237**	**133**	**.000**
		Post-test	**2.8060**	**.28579**					
Students' critical engagement and historical thinking	**134**	**Pre-test**	**2.5889**	**.27592**	**-.89243**	**-.75608**	**-23.914**	**133**	**.000**
		Post-test	**3.4131**	**.31630**					
Teachers' instructional methods; student engagement and classroom practices	**134**	**Pre-test**	**2.5929**	**.24982**	**-1.03995**	**-.87303**	**-22.668**	**133**	**.000**
		Post-test	**3.5494**	**.43388**					

Interpreting Pre-Test and Post-Test Results.

A paired samples t-test was used to compare pre- and post-intervention mean across four aspects related to students' understanding and engagement in learning history. Participants were 134 tenth graders from two public secondary schools in Shambu town. The intervention was carried out over 14 periods of instruction. Before the intervention, participants had Mean = 2.3857, SD = 0.33640, after intervention = **2.9716**, SD = **0.36063**, **t (133) = -15.741, p < 0.001**: Significant improvement noted for understanding students' views and learning in history. This shows that students started to think more positively about history after the program. For the essence of history textbook an average Mean score was **2.4981** increased to **2.8060** before and after the intervention, a paired-samples t-test revealed a significant difference between the two time points, **t(133) = -11.237, p < 0.001**: Significant improvement noted. For the **s**kills of using history textbook average score was **2.5889** before and increased to **3.4131** after the intervention, **t (133) = -23.914, p < 0.001**: Significant improvement noted. On the aspect of the teachers' instructional methods and students' engagement the mean average score was **2.5929** increased to **3.5494, t (133) = -22.668, p < 0.001: Significant improvement noted**. This shows that students felt more engaged and involved in their history classes after the *Reading Like a Historian Lesson* intervention.

Understanding the statistical values, for instance, the numbers after the averages (like **.33640**) are called standard deviations. They tell us how much the scores vary. A smaller number means the scores are closer together, while a larger number means they are more spread out. The numbers like **.000** at the end of each line are very important. They show that the changes in scores are statistically significant. This means that the differences in scores before and after the program are not just due to chance. They are likely because of the teaching program. The t-value t(**133**) = **-15.741** shows how much the post-test scores differed from the pre-test scores. The number in parentheses (**133**) is the degrees of freedom, which is related to the number of students in the study. The "p < .05" means that the results are statistically significant, meaning the improvement in scores is likely not due to chance. Because the p value is less than .05, the null-hypothesis is rejected. The 95% confidence interval of the mean difference between the pre-test and post-test scores was from **-.65960** to **-.51234**. This means that if the study were repeated many times, 95%

of the time, the true difference in scores would fall within this range. A negative number in this context indicates that the post-test scores were higher than the pre-test scores.

Students' Constructed Responses to a Sample of Questions using Reading Like a Historian Heuristic

The study implemented a structured lesson format where each session began with a central historical question (e.g., "What were the causes and consequences of the Battle of Adwa?") to focus student inquiry. Students engaged in rigorous source analysis, examining at least two contrasting primary and secondary documents while applying RLH heuristics to evaluate author bias, historical context, and source reliability. To support this inquiry-based approach, supplementary materials including curated handouts, instructional PowerPoint slides, and online tutorials from the Oromia Education Bureau were provided; ensuring students had multiple access points to develop their historical thinking skills. This consistent instructional framework enabled students to systematically develop disciplinary literacy while engaging with complex historical content.

For the period of State Formation & Modernization (1855-1913), students analyzed the contrasting unification approaches of Emperors Tewodros II, Yohannes IV, and Menelik II, evaluating historical sources that revealed their differing visions for Ethiopia. The unit on Foreign Threats & National Resistance (1871-1896) featured document-based investigations of European colonial ambitions, with particular emphasis on analyzing multiple accounts of the Battle of Adwa to understand its domestic and international significance. In general, it aims to:

1. Analyze the causes, processes, and impacts of unification and subjugation during the reigns of Tewodros II, Yohannes IV, and Menelik II.
2. Evaluate modernization attempts under Ethiopian emperors.
3. Compare and contrasting religious policies during the imperial period.
4. Identify foreign powers that threaten Ethiopia's sovereignty.
5. Investigate power struggles among ruling elites and their consequences.
6. Examine the significance of the Battle of Adwa.

Table 15: Overview of Historical Inquiry-Based Writing Strategies

Ethiopian History Unit – 3	Examples of Central Historical Questions of the Unit	Historical Reading and Writing Strategy
3.2. The Making of Modern Ethiopian State 1855-1913 3.3. External Aggressions and the Unity of Ethiopian People in Defense of National Sovereignty, 1871-1896 3.4. Inception of Power Struggle among the Ruling Elites, 1906 - 1935 3.5. Fascist Italian Aggression and Patriotic Resistance Historical thinking Concepts:	1. Students: be in-group and write their arguments from the materials you have provided on the causes, process and impacts of unification and subjugation during the three emperors based on sources. 2. Explain major attempts of modernization during Tewedros II, Yohannis IV and Menelik II. 3. Compare and contrast religious reforms and policies undertaken during the imperial period. How did the religious policy of Yohannes treated Islam in Wollo? What kind of policy did Menelik II follow in terms of religion in the territory he determined? What kind of religious policy did Menilek II follow in Arsi,Bale, Sidamo, Somali … during his expansion? 2. Identify and write the foreign powers who attempted to violate Ethiopia's territorial integrity in the second half of 19th C. 3. Mention at least four battles where Ethiopia scored decisive victories over foreign aggressors in the second half of 19th C. 4. After reading the two history textbooks, the cause and results of	Questioning sources Contextualizing sources Corroborating sources Close-Reading sources Evidence-based thinking, claim, and argumentation writing Constructing a narrative based on evidence

	different battles are made from 1821-1941 and produce a time chart. 5. Why did the succession problem begin in 1906 and what was the solution given? What was the reason for the power struggle between Lij Iyasu, Taytu & Shoan nobility? List the reforms of Lij Iyasu and the impacts of his reforms. 6. Identify the causes and Consequences of the battle of Adwa both at national and global levels and write a summary.	

This table outlines the structured approach used in Ethiopian history instruction, emphasizing questioning, contextualization, corroboration, and close reading.

Students developed disciplinary historical skills through structured application of four core Reading Like a Historian strategies. They learned to interrogate sources by identifying authors' purposes and potential biases, situate events within their proper religious, economic and political contexts, cross-verify facts across multiple accounts, and perform close textual analysis to detect subtle language choices that revealed perspectives. These analytical approaches transformed classroom practice from passive content reception to active historical construction.

The intervention yielded measurable improvements across three key dimensions of historical learning. Students demonstrated enhanced critical thinking by moving beyond history textbook narratives to construct interpretations grounded in evidentiary analysis. Their argumentation skills strengthened considerably as shown through more sophisticated written responses that marshaled appropriate evidence to support claims. Perhaps most notably, classroom engagement levels increased markedly as students participate more actively in source-based discussions and developed greater confidence in articulating historical interpretations. These outcomes suggest the RLH approach successfully developed both substantive knowledge of Ethiopian history and the procedural skills of historical thinking.

4.6. The effects of explicit teaching of historical content knowledge and historical thinking concepts using RLH Strategies on Teachers' Pedagogical Practice and Students' Motivation and Engagement

In this section, it has been systematically examining the intervention's impact on both teacher practice and student outcomes (McKenney & Reeves, 2018). Through rigorous analysis of mixed-methods data - including classroom observations, teacher reflections, and student assessments. This phase provides comprehensive insights into how the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) strategies transformed history instruction. Key to this phase is its dual focus on assessing intervention effectiveness and identifying implementation challenges.

The explicit teaching of the *Reading Like a Historian* (RLH) strategies has significant effects on both teachers' pedagogical practices and students' motivation and engagement in history education. To explore intervention teachers' self-confidence and adaptations, six self-efficacy

open questions were raised after intervention for teachers and both teachers have reported high levels of engagement with the reading and writing tasks.

For Teachers: RLH transforms instructional practices by shifting from lecture-based teaching to facilitate inquiry-driven instruction. Teachers act as guides, helping students develop analytical skills rather than merely transferring information. Teachers act as facilitators, guiding students to think critically rather than simply providing answers. Furthermore, this method encourages the use of multiple sources, fostering RLH strategies such as sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration. Intervention Teachers' who integrate RLH strategies into their classroom instruction reported an increasing confidence in facilitating historical discussions, designing document-based lessons, and assessing students' analytical reasoning. Additionally, the structured approach of RLH helps teachers align their instruction with disciplinary literacy practices, promoting deeper student engagement and critical thinking.

For Students: The method enhances motivation and engagement by making history relevant and interactive. Instead of passively receiving historical narratives, students actively engage in interpreting the past, constructing arguments, and discussing competing perspectives with their peers. It also improves students' ability to think critically, evaluate sources, and construct well-reasoned arguments—skills applicable beyond the history classroom. Rather than passively receiving information, students take an active role in historical interpretation. RLH instruction helps students develop analytical skills that apply to cross-check information in everyday life.

In other words, for students, explicit instruction in RLH strategies enhances motivation and engagement by transforming history lessons into active investigations rather than passive memorization of facts. The emphasis on questioning historical narratives, analyzing multiple perspectives, and constructing evidence-based arguments makes history more relevant and personally meaningful. Studies indicate that students exposed to RLH strategies demonstrate improved reading comprehension, argumentation skills, and historical empathy. Furthermore, the interactive nature of RLH—through discussions, debates, and inquiry-based assignments—fosters greater classroom participation and intellectual curiosity.

Overall, RLH strategies not only improve students' analytical skills but also cultivate a deeper appreciation for history as a dynamic and interpretive discipline. Over time, as students become more comfortable with RLH and historical thinking metacognitive concepts, scaffolding is gradually removed to promote self-regulated learning and independent analysis.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

Understanding how students engage with history is crucial in shaping effective educational practices. In recent years, there has been growing attention to the ways students perceive historical knowledge, interact with textbooks, and respond to different instructional methods in the classroom. These factors not only influence students' motivation to learn history but also shape their ability to think critically and use historical sources effectively. Despite the recognized importance of these elements, many students continue to face challenges in developing robust historical thinking skills and in engaging meaningfully with curricular materials. This study seeks to address these gaps by examining changes in students' epistemological views on history, their perceptions of textbooks, and their skills in using these resources, and their engagement with instructional methods before and after targeted interventions. By exploring these dimensions, the research aims to provide insights that can inform effective history teaching strategies and which ultimately foster deeper student learning and engagement.

5.2. Historical Interpretation and Teacher Epistemological Beliefs

The analysis of Ethiopian history teachers' conceptions of history and historical thinking reveals significant gaps in both knowledge and pedagogical practices, highlighting challenges in fostering critical historical understanding. The survey findings on teachers' epistemic stances revealed inconsistencies, even though criterialist beliefs ranking highest, followed by subjectivist views, while objectivist (copier) beliefs did not align with theoretical expectations. The criterialist stance, which emphasizes critical thinking and evidence-based reasoning, is favored in modern history education, yet many teachers still hold objectivist or subjectivist views, hindering their ability to promote deep historical understanding. Responses to the Beliefs about History

Questionnaire (BHQ) highlighted significant misconceptions, such as the belief that historical disagreements stem solely from a lack of evidence (M = 3.47) and that "facts speak for themselves" (M = 4.00), reflecting a naïve realist perspective. Additionally, the notion that teachers should not question students' historical opinions but only assess factual knowledge (M = 3.47) underscores a reliance on traditional, fact-based instruction, limiting students' critical thinking development.

A heavy reliance on textbooks as the primary instructional resource further reinforces a fact-based approach to history education, with over 90% of teachers using approved textbooks without integrating additional sources or inquiry-based activities. This limits students' exposure to diverse perspectives and critical engagement with historical narratives. Many teachers viewed their role as ensuring students memorize facts rather than fostering debate, analysis, or evidence-based reconstruction of the past.

In this context research revealed that, when one holds naïve perspectives often treat history as an objective recounting of past events, positioning learners as passive information gatherers. This approach overlooks the complexities of historical inquiry, which involves recognizing history as a constructed narrative shaped by diverse interpretations, contexts, and biases (Maggioni et al., 2009; Nokes, 2014; Stoel et al., 2017). In contrast, a more nuanced understanding encourages critical analysis of historical evidence, considering factors such as source reliability and bias.

Fallace and Neem (2005) highlight the connection between historical thinking and epistemological understanding, stressing that historical knowledge is constructed from a limited set of primary sources, each influenced by perspective, positionality, and context. This underscores the interpretive nature of historical knowledge, which requires sophisticated epistemological beliefs for effective teaching (Wilke et al., 2022; Stoel et al., 2022; Sakki & Pirttilä-Backman, 2019; Gestsdóttir et al., 2021). Teachers' epistemological beliefs significantly influence their pedagogical choices, particularly in fostering critical historical thinking.

Research identifies three epistemic stances in understanding historical knowledge: objectivist, subjectivist, and criterialist. The objectivist stance views history as a direct reflection of past

events, while the subjectivist stance sees it as a matter of interpretation and opinion. The criterialist stance, favored in contemporary discussions, treats history as a research process involving critical evaluation and interpretation (Stoel et al., 2017; Wilke & Depaepe, 2019; Miguel-Revilla et al., 2022). VanSledright (2011) further classifies epistemological stances into naïve realists (copiers), naïve relativists (borrowers), and critical pragmatists, with the latter aligning closely with the criterialist stance by recognizing history as a social construction requiring critical evaluation.

Overall, these findings reveal a pressing need for targeted interventions to enhance teachers' understanding of history as an interpretive and analytical discipline, moving beyond rote memorization and simplistic views of historical knowledge. Addressing these gaps is crucial for fostering critical historical thinking, creating more engaging, and meaningful history education experiences for students.

5.3. Evaluating Assessment Techniques and Learning Outcomes in Grade 10 History Curricular Materials

One of the major intervention areas to achieve quality education in Ethiopia, as the MoE has recommended that all textbooks must be prepared not simply contain knowledge to be acquired, but promote skill development, and focus on competency achievement through engaging activities (MoE, 2020). The MoE emphasizes that textbooks should not merely transmit knowledge but should also focus on skill development and competency achievement through engaging activities, aligning with global best practices in history education.

Despite the recommendations, the study’s analysis of Ethiopia’s Grade 10 History textbook through Bloom's Taxonomy revealed a significant emphasis on lower-order thinking skills, with 53.19% of learning objectives and assessment activities focusing on remembering, understanding, and applying, while only 46.78% targeted higher-order skills like analyzing, evaluating, and creating. This imbalance underscores a predominant focus on factual recall and conceptual understanding rather than fostering critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. The assessment techniques further reinforced this trend, relying heavily on multiple-choice, short-

answer, and true/false questions, which promote rote memorization over historical inquiry skills. Higher-level assessments, such as document-based questions (DBQs) and performance tasks, were largely absent, limiting students' opportunities to analyze sources, construct arguments, and engage in deeper historical reasoning (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Seixas & Morton, 2013).

Additionally, the study identified a misalignment between the Ethiopian General Education Curriculum Framework's vision of outcome-based learning, which integrates 21st-century skills, and the textbook's assessment structure. The overreliance on lower-order questions fails to challenge students to develop essential skills such as critical thinking, interpretation, and historical argumentation, thereby hindering the realization of the curriculum's goals. These findings highlight the need for a more competency-based approach in history education, emphasizing inquiry-based learning, the use of multiple sources, and opportunities for students to engage in critical discussions and interpretations of historical events. The study recommends revising assessment strategies to include more open-ended and analytical tasks, which would better prepare students for complex reasoning and informed decision-making in the modern world (Ethiopian General Education Curriculum Framework, 2020; Wineburg, 2001). Such reforms are crucial for aligning history education with the demands of contemporary society and fostering deeper historical understanding.

5.4. History Teachers' Preparedness for Teaching School History and Implementing Historical Thinking Practices in the Classroom

The interview responses from Ethiopian history teachers reveal diverse perspectives on the conceptualization of history, historical thinking, teaching objectives, and instructional methods, highlighting both strengths and gaps in their understanding and practices. When defining history as an academic discipline, most teachers emphasized its role in studying the past, present, and future, with some equating history with identity (T4) or viewing it as a systematic study of past human experiences supported by evidence (T5, T6, T7). However, one teacher (T3) demonstrated a limited understanding by defining history as oral transmission of information, reflecting a lack of awareness of its interpretive nature. Similarly, definitions of historical thinking varied, with some teachers describing it as an evidence-based, procedural approach (T1,

T5) or a method to understand facts and reality (T7), while others equated it with studying sources (T8) or analyzing change and continuity (T6). These responses indicate a partial grasp of historical thinking, with only a few teachers fully aligning their definitions with scholarly perspectives.

Regarding the goals of history teaching, most teachers recognized its importance for understanding the past, present, and future, with some emphasizing critical thinking and scientific analysis (T4, T7). However, others provided weaker justifications, such as preparing students for employment (T9) or meeting departmental requirements (T1). When asked about the main goals of history education, most teachers focused on knowledge acquisition and collective memory rather than fostering transferable skills like historical thinking. Only a few implicitly mentioned historical thinking (T2, T7), while others emphasized memorization (T10) or achieving good results (T9). Some teachers, however, highlighted broader goals, such as developing disciplined citizens with questioning minds (T4), fostering intellectual growth (T5), and understanding human-environment interactions (T6).

In terms of teaching methods and instructional materials, teachers identified several challenges, including rigid curricula, content-heavy textbooks, and a lack of historical sources (T1, T2, T3, T5, T6, T7, T8, and T9). They also noted that these factors contribute to students' lack of interest in history. To make the subject more appealing, teachers suggested using diverse teaching methods, interactive lessons, and appealing teaching aids (T2, T4, T7, T8, T9, and T10). Effective history teaching was described as involving well-prepared textbooks, active student participation, independent inquiry, and the use of primary and secondary sources supported by technology (T1, T2, T4, T5, T6, T8, T9, and T10). These insights underscore the need for curriculum reforms, better resource availability, and professional development to enhance teachers' ability to foster historical thinking and engage students effectively.

The quantitative phase of the study, utilizing a 75-item Historical Thinking Skills Questionnaire (HTSQ) administered to 15 history teachers in Shambu town, revealed significant insights into teachers' preparation and classroom practices regarding historical thinking skills (HTS). The data, analyzed using SPSS version 25, showed that teachers occasionally experienced sourcing,

corroboration, contextualization, and explicit instruction during their college content and methods courses, with mean scores ranging from 3.172 to 3.287. However, explicit instruction had the lowest mean score (3.28), indicating limited exposure to this critical aspect of historical thinking. In classroom practices, sourcing scored the highest (M = 3.07), followed by corroboration and contextualization (M = 2.94), while explicit instruction remained the lowest (M = 2.90), suggesting that teachers only sometimes incorporate these skills into their teaching (Tables 10 and 11).

The findings highlight a gap in Ethiopian teachers' conceptual understanding and application of historical thinking, despite their exposure to HTS during college methods and content courses. Teachers' responses indicated a stronger focus on national narratives and collective memory rather than disciplinary goals like historical thinking, aligning with broader debates in history education (Wangdu, 2021; Sakki & Pirttilä-Backman, 2019; Yilmaz, 2008). This discrepancy is further compounded by the challenges teachers face in balancing content coverage and student behavior management, which hinders their ability to emphasize interpretation and critical thinking aspects of history education (Barton & Levstik, 2003). The study underscores the need for enhanced teacher training and professional development programs focused on HTS, particularly sourcing, corroboration, contextualization, and explicit instruction, to bridge this gap (Wilke & Depaepe, 2019; OECD, 2018).

5.5. Designing and Implementing Reading Like a Historian (RLH) Strategies in the History Classroom: A Structured Approach

Designing and implementing RLH strategies requires balancing skill development, resource innovation, and cultural responsiveness. By addressing challenges through collaborative, context-sensitive approaches, educators can transform history classrooms into dynamic spaces where students critically engage with the past and its implications for the future. The pretest and posttest results demonstrate that the instructional design intervention significantly improved students' epistemological views on history, their skills in using history textbooks, and their engagement in classroom activities related to history inquiry. They became more motivated, found textbooks more useful, improved their skills, and felt more engaged in the classroom. This

suggests that effective teaching methods can significantly enhance students' learning experiences in history.

5.5.1. Secondary School Learners' Responses to Historical Reading and Writing Tasks in a Reading Like a Historian (RLH) Framework

Designing history instruction around multiple text-based interpretations begins with crafting thoughtful historical questions that engage students in inquiry-driven learning. Effective historical questions are open to multiple interpretations and grounded in evidence, encouraging students to analyze historical records critically rather than relying on personal beliefs (Reisman & Wineburg, 2012). These questions can be evaluative, requiring judgment based on evidence, or interpretive, fostering open-ended exploration of historical events (Reisman & Wineburg, 2012). While open-ended questions are often seen as suitable for advanced students, the Reading Like a Historian Lesson (RLHL) approach advocates for providing all students, regardless of reading level, with opportunities to think like historians. This fosters critical analysis, engagement, and a sense of belonging, preparing them for academic success and informed citizenship (Wineburg, Martin, & Monte-Sano, 2012).

Central historical questions must align with available evidence from primary sources to ensure students engage critically with the material. This approach transforms reading into an active inquiry process, deepening historical understanding and developing analytical skills, aligning with curriculum goals emphasizing critical thinking and Multiperspectivity (MoE, 2020). Researchers have used similar tasks to assess students' historical reading, thinking, and writing, emphasizing evidence analysis, interpretation, and argumentation (Fogo, Reisman, & Breakstone, 2019; Monte-Sano, De La Paz, & Felton, 2014). While historians generate their own questions and discover evidence, classroom constraints require structured tasks that still foster historical thinking.

The RLHL approach integrates traditional classroom norms with structured historical inquiry, using a "Document-Based Lesson" format centered on a Central Historical Question. This method encourages students to analyze multiple documents, reconcile conflicting accounts, and

develop historical thinking concepts, marking a shift from textbook-driven instruction (Reisman, 2012). However, students often struggle with biases in historical narratives, limited intertextual comparisons, and a tendency to view history as a collection of facts rather than a contested field. Encouraging practices like sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration can help students recognize bias, understand context, and synthesize information across sources, fostering critical thinking and deeper historical engagement (Wineburg, Martin, & Monte-Sano, 2012). Ultimately, this approach aims to develop both historical thinking concepts and critical literacy, preparing students to navigate complex historical and contemporary information.

5.5.2. Challenges faced by Students in Practicing Reading Like a Historian (RLH) in History Classrooms.

The students' constructed responses in the study showed limited improvement in practicing Reading Like a Historian (RLH) techniques, with performance categorized between "Satisfactory" and "Unsatisfactory." This highlights the need for a more integrated approach to teaching RLH, ensuring both theoretical understanding and practical application are adequately addressed (Nokes, 2017). A key issue is that students often view history as a set of facts rather than a constructed narrative, leading to writing that lacks interpretation and argumentation. Emphasizing evidentiary reasoning and the interpretive nature of history is crucial for advancing students' historical thinking (Monte-Sano, 2011).

Research underscores the gap between experts and novices in analyzing historical sources. Experts use heuristics like sourcing, corroboration, and contextualization to critically evaluate documents, while novices rely heavily on textbooks and struggle to resolve conflicting information (Wineburg, 1991, 1998; Monte-Sano, 2011). This suggests the need to foster metacognitive skills, such as self-questioning and self-monitoring, to bridge this gap and promote deeper historical reasoning.

The lack of engagement in historical reading and writing among students calls for a reevaluation of pedagogical strategies. Traditional, textbook-driven methods are inadequate and risk distorting

historical interpretations. Educators must adopt approaches that encourage critical analysis of diverse sources, fostering both historical thinking and critical literacy.

5.5.3. Navigating Barriers: The Challenges of Teaching Historical Content Knowledge and Historical Thinking Concepts via RLH Strategies in Ethiopian Secondary Schools

To explore intervention teachers' self-confidence and adaptations, I have posed six self-efficacy open questions after intervention for teachers adapted from Fogo et al (2019). The result shows that the responses of the intervention teachers' reflection positive and enthusiastic. However, they have raised several issues related to time, large class size, preparing students for national examinations, lack of professional development, and lack of instructional materials and students' commitment in general.

The study explored intervention teachers' self-confidence and adaptability in implementing the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) approach through six self-efficacy questions. Teachers expressed enthusiasm but identified challenges such as time constraints, large class sizes, preparation for national examinations, lack of professional development, and insufficient instructional materials. The study suggest that such barriers can hinder the effective implementation of RLH, despite its potential to foster historical thinking and engagement (Fogo et al., 2019).

Researchers emphasize the importance of historical thinking in helping students navigate their identities and societal roles, rather than creating "mini-historians" (Clark & Sears, 2020; Seixas, cited in Clark & Sears, 2020). RLH strategies such as sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration, enable students to critically analyze historical narratives and understand their complexities (Levesque, 2008; Wineburg, 1991). However, teachers face significant challenges, including curriculum constraints that prioritize breadth over depth, traditional assessment methods misaligned with inquiry-based learning, and inadequate training in historical thinking pedagogy (Bain, 2005; Thorp & Persson, 2020; Van Hover & Yeager, 2004).

Additionally, student engagement and readiness pose challenges, as many students are accustomed to passive learning and struggle with critical analysis of historical documents

(Shanahan et al., 2016; Seixas, 1998). Resource limitations, including lack of access to diverse historical materials and technology, further complicate the implementation of RLH in Ethiopian secondary schools.

Of course, researchers have recognized that working with a model of historical thinking is challenging but rewarding. Peter Seixas, as quoted in Clark and Sears (2020), have discussed the vital role of history education in helping young people navigate their identities and responsibilities in a complex world. He argues that the goal of history education disciplinary knowledge should not be to create "mini-historians" or prepare students for academic careers, but rather to equip them with the historical tools and processes necessary for understanding their place in society. This approach encourages students to reflect on who they are, where they stand, and what they can do as individuals and members of various groups within a rapidly changing and often conflict-ridden environment. Seixas highlights the importance of teaching students how to think historically, which involves engaging with historical narratives critically rather than passively accepting them. This method promotes a deeper understanding of history as a dynamic field shaped by multiple perspectives and interpretations. By fostering historical thinking concepts, teachers can help students make sense of their own experiences and the broader societal issues they face.

Levesque (2008, pp. 46-52) emphasizes the significance of engaging in historical thinking concepts as a means to cultivate a more sophisticated understanding of history. These skills facilitate deeper *historical explanation, justification, and re-evaluation*, allowing students to navigate the complexities of the past more effectively. This does not mean that teaching historical thinking is challenge free. Bain's (2005, p. 180) work on high school history education highlights the significant challenges teachers face in delivering effective instruction within a complex and expansive subject area. These challenges are compounded by *large class sizes, predefined course goals, and the reliance on textbooks*, which often present historical content in a simplified and authoritative manner.

According to the findings of Awang, Ahmad, & Dahalan (2019), several challenges hinder the effective implementation of outdoor learning in history education. These challenges include time

constraints, teacher less efficiency, curriculum integration, and classroom management. Time has been identified as the most significant barrier to conducting outdoor learning in history classes. The integration of outdoor learning into the existing curriculum poses a challenge as well. Many teachers view outdoor activities as irrelevant or an additional burden rather than an essential component of history education. Managing student behavior during outdoor activities can be particularly challenging (p. 44). History topics often require extensive time for thorough exploration, and teachers typically face packed schedules often due to busy schedules and classes that limit opportunities for outdoor activities. Despite these challenges, historical thinking concepts are crucial for students to improve their ability to remember, understand and analyze the facts according to the aspects highlighted in it. Another biggest challenge for teachers seeking to incorporate historical thinking into their work has been locating materials that students find interesting and can use (Clark and Sears, 2020, p. 267).

These challenges stem from traditional educational practices, curriculum constraints, assessment practices, teacher preparation and professional development, student engagement and readiness, and resource availability. The key issues identified in this study are highly related to the above research findings. The large class sizes (60+ students) and time constraints are noted as challenges. This may make it difficult to implement more interactive, inquiry-based approaches. There is limited use of diverse sources or perspectives. Mostly they relied upon textbooks. While this approach has shown significant promise in fostering deeper understanding of historical contents and historical inquiry among students.

To begin with, many history teachers are accustomed to traditional methods that emphasize rote memorization of facts from textbooks. Transitioning to the RLH approach requires a fundamental change in teaching philosophy, moving towards inquiry-based learning. This shift can be difficult for teachers who have relied on conventional methods for years, as they must learn to facilitate discussions and encourage critical thinking rather than simply delivering content (Colis et al., 2016; Reisman, 2012; Nokes et al., 2007; Shanahan et al., 2016).

The second challenges stem from curriculum constraints. Teachers often encounter curriculum constraints that prioritize breadth over depth of content. The breadth of content that teachers are

required to cover can limit their ability to delve deeply into specific historical topics. This pressure often results in a superficial treatment of material, making it difficult to foster the analytical skills necessary for historical thinking (Thorp, & Persson, 2020; Van Hover, & Yeager, 2004). The RLH approach encourages deep analysis of fewer topics rather than superficial coverage of many. However, educators frequently face pressure to adhere to extensive syllabi, which can limit opportunities for in-depth inquiry and critical engagement with historical materials (Colis et al., 2016).

The third challenge related to assessment practices. Assessment methods can also pose challenges in an inquiry-based framework. Traditional assessments, such as multiple-choice tests, do not align well with the goals of the RLH curriculum, which emphasizes critical thinking and argumentation based on evidence (Shanahan et al., 2016). Developing assessments that accurately measure students' abilities to analyze sources and construct historical arguments is essential but often difficult for teachers. Therefore, standardized testing and multiple-choice assessments typically emphasize factual recall rather than critical analysis. This focus can discourage teachers from adopting engaging methodologies like RLH, which require students to analyze sources and construct arguments based on evidence. Consequently, there is a disconnect between teaching practices and assessment methods.

Furthermore, as I have observed during the analysis and exploration phase, the invited participant teachers have declined my invitation to cooperate for intervention. Secondary school history teachers of the study area report feeling unprepared to implement historical thinking concepts effectively due to inadequate training in these pedagogical approaches. This has been realized during semi structured interview sessions that there is the lack of adequate training and professional development focused on historical thinking pedagogy. Participant teachers do not feel equipped to guide students through complex processes such as sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, and close reading—key strategies integral to the RLH approach. Without proper training, teachers may struggle to implement these strategies effectively in their classrooms (Shanahan et al., 2016; Colis et al., 2016; Van Hover, & Yeager, 2004).

In addition, student engagement and readiness is another essential factor. Engaging students who are accustomed to passive learning can be challenging. Many students initially resist questioning established narratives or engaging critically with primary sources. Building students' confidence in evaluating multiple perspectives requires time and tailored instruction. Additionally, some students may face difficulties with reading comprehension, which can hinder their ability to analyze historical documents effectively (Shanahan et al., 2016; Seixas, 1998).

Finally, to implement the RLH lesson plan requires valuable materials and frameworks that are more refined. Secondary school history teachers have no access to these resources or the necessary support systems within their educational environments. This disparity can limit the effectiveness of the RLH approach across different settings. Lack of technology integration into history education presents challenges both for Ethiopian schoolteachers and students. While technology can enhance engagement and provide access to diverse resources, many teachers face obstacles such as inadequate training, lack of digitized historical resources in the Ethiopian secondary school system.

To scale-up the implementation of the "Reading Like a Historian" approach in Ethiopian secondary schools, it is vital to address the challenges related to resource availability, technology integration, teacher training, and assessment practices. RLH lessons require significant preparation time for sourcing materials, designing debates, and scaffolding skills—a challenge in overcrowded classrooms with limited teaching hours (Reisman, 2012). Addressing these challenges is crucial for successfully implementing this innovative pedagogical approach in history education. To underline to overcome these obstacles requires ongoing professional development for secondary history teachers, supportive curricular changes that prioritize inquiry over rote memorization and innovative assessment practices that reflect students' analytical abilities. By addressing these issues, teachers can create more effective history classrooms that prepare students to navigate complex historical narratives and historical thinking concepts as informed citizens in a rapidly changing world.

5.6. Revitalizing History Classrooms for 21st-Century Learning

The effects of explicit teaching of the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) and historical thinking skills in Ethiopian secondary schools has the potential to transform history education by shifting the focus from rote memorization of facts to critical analysis and inquiry. This approach encourages students to move beyond passive acceptance of textbook narratives and instead engage deeply working with historical sources, asking "why" and "how" events occurred, and evaluating evidence from multiple perspectives (Wineburg, 2001). Such a shift not only enhances students' understanding of historical content but also fosters essential skills like critical thinking, sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration, which are transferable to other academic and real-world contexts (Reisman, 2012).

For teachers, adopting RLH requires a significant shift in instructional practices, moving from traditional lecture-based methods to inquiry-driven, student-centered learning. While this transition can be challenging, it is ultimately rewarding, as it increases student engagement, participation, and retention of historical knowledge (Monte-Sano & Budano, 2013). Teachers play a crucial role in this transformation by designing central historical questions, facilitating debates, and guiding students through the process of analyzing primary and secondary sources (Bain, 2006). By integrating RLH strategies, teachers can create a more dynamic and inclusive classroom environment that encourages students to think like historians.

However, the successful implementation of RLH depends on addressing several challenges, including teacher training, curriculum constraints, and resource limitations. Providing teachers with professional development and practical tools is essential to help them transition to this new approach (Seixas & Morton, 2013). Additionally, curricular reforms and innovative assessment methods are needed to align with the goals of RLH, emphasizing critical thinking and evidence-based argumentation over factual recall (VanSledright, 2011). In low-resource contexts like Ethiopia, infrastructural and systemic barriers further complicate adoption (Ministry of Education, Ethiopia, 2015). Digital archives and open-access primary sources can mitigate material limitations (Breakstone, 2021), while assessments emphasizing argumentation and evidence use ensure alignment with RLH goals (VanSledright & Limón, 2006).

In conclusion, the RLH approach offers a powerful framework for enhancing history education in Ethiopian secondary schools. By making historical thinking concepts explicit and integrating them into classroom practices, educators can foster a deeper understanding of the past while equipping students with the skills needed to navigate the complexities of the modern world (Wineburg & Reisman, 2015). This shift not only makes history education more engaging and meaningful but also prepares students to become informed, critical thinkers and active participants in society (Ministry of Education, Ethiopia, 2020).

5.7. Design principles emerging from the Study

Design-Based Research (DBR) is a methodology that aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice in educational settings. As articulated by Plomp (2013, p. 22), DBR seeks to "make explicit the implicit decisions associated with a design process" and transform these into actionable guidelines for addressing educational challenges. Plomp refers to this as “the twofold yield of design research” (p. 23). These “guidelines” or “heuristic principles” (p. 29) are often described as design principles. According to Armstrong et al (2020, pp. 38-39), the knowledge generated through Design-Based Research (DBR) can be categorized into two main types “tangible, practical outcomes” and “intangible, theoretical outcomes.” They defined tangible outcomes as the concrete interventions and practices developed through DBR. Intangible outcomes focus on the theoretical contributions that arise from DBR's emphasis on context.

Cochrane et al (2023, unpaginated) refer to the final phase of Design-Based Research (DBR) as “design principles and theory building” describing it as crucial for synthesizing findings and developing “transferable design principles” that can be applied to various learning contexts. This phase typically involves retrospective analysis and reflection on the outcomes of the interventions implemented during earlier phases.

5.7.1. Four Design Principles to make Reading Like a Historian visible and adaptable teaching strategy in history education

To effectively develop transferable skills among students considering “the limited capacity of short-term working memory” (Ormrod, & Jones, 2023, p. 41) teachers can implement several

strategies that align with the principles of "Reading Like a Historian" and historical thinking concepts. These strategies focus on enhancing students' abilities to process, retain, and apply knowledge across various contexts (Stoel, Van Drie, & Van Boxtel, 2015; Smets, 2024).

Smets (2024) identifies four configurations that elucidate how substantive historical concepts are effectively learned, focusing on the mechanisms that influence learning outcomes in relation to working memory and cognitive load. Overloaded short-term working memory hinders effective learning, knowledge must be stored in long-term memory for sustainable acquisition, knowledge builds on previous knowledge, and knowledge becomes more accessible with repeated use. Addressing these limitations and promoting effective knowledge acquisition and retention can improve student-learning outcomes in history education.

5.7.2. Where to Begin? To build history teachers competencies in teaching Reading Like a Historian Strategies: practical and theoretical implications

First, most of us who teach history should be curious about the importance of teaching history as fundamental to fostering critical thinking, informed citizenship, and a deeper understanding of the world reconnecting with the core principles of historical education and understanding requirements of the curriculum is essential. This can be made effective through history teaching that involves engaging students through active learning, methodological understanding, and personal relevance, while addressing challenges such as uninspiring content presentation and instructional constraints.

Effective history teaching is fundamentally rooted in eliciting student historical thinking, which is essential for meaningful learning in the classroom. Understanding how students learn history is significantly influenced by the concept of prior knowledge—the information and experiences they bring into the classroom. This principle emphasizes that students do not enter learning environments as blank slates; rather, their pre-existing understandings shape their engagement with new historical content. Lee (2005, p. 31) asserted, “Students do not come to their classrooms empty-handed”. This study suggests that epistemic beliefs, shaped by personal experiences and educational interventions, significantly influence how history is taught and

understood, impacting both teachers' and students' approaches to historical knowledge and classroom practices. Therefore, if we plan to achieve progress in students' conceptual understanding in particular ways, it is easier to anticipate the preconceptions and misconceptions that students may bring to any topic. Doing so makes it easier for us to identify, exploit, and remediate the ideas students use to make sense of the work at hand (Monte-Sano, 2011).

History education researchers have investigated a wide variety of instructional methods designed to help students read like historians. Monte- Sano (2011) argues that discipline-specific reading and writing strategies in history classes can improve students' understanding of history and develop advanced literacy skills while focusing on evidence use, perspective, and interpretation to develop their historical thinking concepts. Another argument in this field concise with historical thinking is driven by the process of questioning, which involves critical reasoning, contextualization, and the use of heuristics, rather than merely focusing on factual answers (Drie, & Boxtel, 2008).

The argument that historical thinking is fundamentally a process driven by questioning rather than answering has been well supported in the literature on historical education and inquiry. Asking historical questions enables us to engage with the complexities of the past and explore new avenues of thought. "By constantly asking new questions, we can expand our understanding of the past and deepen our appreciation of history as a discipline" (Elder, Gorzycki, & Paul, 2019, p. 18).

5.7.2.1. Design Principle 1: Asking historical questions

According to Vansledright (2013, p. 32) "without questions, there isn't much need for serious thinking. Without thinking, there is little understanding". Therefore, developing deeper historical understanding begins with rich questions. Van Drie, and Carla Van Boxtel (2008, p. 91) also described questioning as an "engine" for historical reasoning. Historical questions as one of the competencies underlying historical thinking begins by asking and addressing historical questions are an inclination towards adopting inquiry-based learning in history (Vansledright, 2013, p. 81).

Wineburg (1991a) highlights the necessity of integrating questioning into history education as a means to enhance student engagement and understanding. By fostering an environment where students are encouraged to ask significant historical questions, teachers can develop critical thinkers who are equipped to analyze the past and its implications for the present and future. This approach not only enriches students' historical knowledge but also cultivates essential skills in analysis, argumentation, and persuasive writing—key competencies for success across disciplines.

According to Reisman, & Wineburg (2012), the first step in designing history instruction is posing a central question which engages students by directing them to the historical record, allowing for multiple interpretations, and transforming reading into an active inquiry process, rather than their own philosophical or moral beliefs. They further described that historical questions can be categorized into two main types: *evaluative questions*, which require students to assess historical figures and events, and *interpretive questions*, which tend to be more exploratory. A crucial factor in formulating a central question is determining whether it can be substantiated with evidence from the document, or if it leads students away from the available textual evidence (Reisman, & Wineburg, 2012, p.22).

Historical questioning mostly conceptualized in the context of inquiry learning, teaching and learning with historical evidence (sources), working with textbooks and fostering historical argumentation and discussion (Logtenberg, 2012). Yet, questioning is so vital as a part of the historical process that it is difficult to envisage studying history without it. Questioning is the force that drives historical enquiry. A unit of work should ideally start with a key question from which may spring other questions. From open, speculative questions, which may spring from either the students or the teacher, the students can generate further questions, which refine the focus of the inquiry or open up further themes. Although questions should drive topics of study, one might not always start with a question (Turner-Bisset, 2012).

According to a group of experienced “Wisconsin Historians and Educators”, representing elementary through university levels, developed and piloted the *Thinking Like a Historian charts*, asking historical questions is considered the starting point in the historical process of How Do

We Know? What we went to know about the past (Mandell, & Malone, 2008, p. 13). In this historical process, there are three steps: asking questions about the past; gathering sources, evaluating the evidence in those sources, and drawing conclusions, supported by the evidence, that answer the questions. The study of history is not solely defined by the method of inquiry—such as asking questions, examining sources, and drawing conclusions—but also by the critical skills it fosters in students. Engaging with historical records enhances cognitive and affective learning while developing essential analytical skills (p. 78).

As a result, the practice of asking questions in history education is a powerful tool that enhances relevance, deepens understanding, and builds crucial skills for active citizenship. By encouraging students to design meaningful historical inquiries, educators empower them not only to engage with history but also to apply these skills across various disciplines. This approach ultimately prepares students to be informed citizens who can critically analyze information and contribute thoughtfully to society.

To effectively promote historical questioning in students, teachers should design lessons and activities that offer multiple opportunities for inquiry and critical analysis throughout the school year. Key questions for promoting historical literacy include whether lessons encourage students to ask historical questions, gather evidence from various sources, evaluate and analyze historical sources, interpret the historical record to arrive at supported conclusions, and structure lessons around historical categories of inquiry. Teachers should encourage students to formulate their own questions about historical events, gather evidence from both primary and secondary sources, critically assess sources, synthesize information from various sources, and explore the intricacies of historical events and themes. This approach fosters critical thinking and a profound appreciation for history's relevance. By addressing these key questions, teachers can help students develop a nuanced understanding of historical narratives and develop their analytical skills (Mandell, & Malone, 2008, p. 96). This indicates that the role of the teacher in developing historical understanding is crucial, particularly in helping students navigate the complexities and ambiguities of the past. Teachers must purposefully define, model, and practice discipline-specific ways of knowing history to foster critical thinking and inquiry among students. Here’s an exploration of how teachers can effectively facilitate this process.

Reisman and Fogo emphasize the importance of formulating historical questions that possess two key characteristics: they are open to multiple interpretations and they direct students toward the historical record rather than their personal beliefs. This approach is critical in teaching history, as it encourages students to engage with evidence and develop a nuanced understanding of the past. They further divided historical questions into *evaluative* questions, which ask students to pass judgment on historical actors and events or *interpretive* questions, which are more open-ended (Reisman, & Fogo, 2014, p. 156).

Mandell and Malone (2008) suggests starting each lesson and unit with a set of questions to demonstrate that history begins with questions and provide direction for classroom activities. Teachers can do this by defining syllabus topics in questions, writing unit questions on the board, restating driving questions, and writing questions on all worksheets to connect each activity or assignment with the larger question. Drie & Boxtel (2008, p. 92) identify four types of historical questioning: *descriptive, causal, comparative, and evaluative*. They emphasize the importance of engaging students in historical reasoning for a deeper understanding of historical phenomena and the nature of history, as well as developing their ability to think and reason historically in new situations. A good historical question should be grounded in scholarship, debate, and open to multiple perspectives, point students to evidence, be interpretive and evaluative, and invite judgment.

Elder, Gorzycki, & Paul (2019, pp. 18-19) provide a comprehensive framework for understanding historical inquiry that emphasizes the importance of critical thinking in history education. Their insights can be categorized into several key questions that guide historians and students alike in analyzing historical events and sources. These key historical questions require examining sources of information, assessing its quality, interpreting it, assuming assumptions, implying implication, and considering point of view. These questions prompt individuals to examine their perspective and consider other relevant viewpoints, ensuring they are well-informed and able to make informed decisions.

At the heart of asking historical questions is the premise that by emphasizing the importance of asking critical questions, teachers can guide students toward a richer understanding of history

that transcends mere memorization. The ability to internalize information in meaningful ways—moving from inert knowledge to activated knowledge—empowers learners to think critically about the past and its implications for the present and future. This approach not only enhances their grasp of history but also equips them with essential skills for lifelong learning and informed citizenship (Paul, & Elder, 2001).

Questioning in educational research serves as a powerful pedagogical tool that extends beyond mere fact recall; it is fundamental for developing critical thinking skills in students. By focusing on both lower-order and higher-order questions, educators can create a more dynamic learning environment that encourages inquiry, analysis, and creativity. This approach not only enhances comprehension but also prepares students for complex problem solving in various domains (Borich, 1988, pp. 228- 229).

Inclusion, historical questions whether it can be casual, explanatory, evaluating, successful, descriptive, or describing the experience of living in a particular time and place the first design principles suggests that fostering asking historical questions in history education as a crucial for developing students' critical thinking skills and deepening their understanding historical contents. By encouraging essential questions that invite reflection and analysis, teachers can create an environment where students actively engage in historical research. In addition, by moving beyond questions with straightforward correct answers, teachers can promote deeper understanding and critical thinking skills among students. This process not only enriches students' understanding of historical knowledge but also develops essential skills in reading and writing with valuable skills in *analysis, argumentation, and persuasive writing*—essential tools for success in any academic discipline (Reisman & Fogo, 2014, p. 153).

5.7.2.2. Design Principle 2: Finding multiple historical sources and using textbook as an alternatives

Research reveals that the role of history textbooks in promoting inquisitive, detective and historical thinking significantly restricts students to notice source information unless explicitly instructed to do so (Monte-Sano, 2011). In contrast, Claravall, & Irey (2021) suggests that

document-based history instruction effectively promotes disciplinary cognitive processing and higher order thinking for students with learning differences, helping them efficiently highlight content knowledge and academic vocabulary. In Ethiopia, the quality of textbooks is a significant issue, as they significantly improve student learning and competency achievement (MoE, 2020). The World Bank study emphasizes the importance of textbooks in effective instruction, especially in Ethiopia where many teachers rely heavily on them, as “many have not yet reached professional levels” (Joshi, & Verspoor, 2012, p. 72).

My argument in this history education doctoral thesis is regarding the limitations in Ethiopian history textbooks and the big lies behind it as highlighted by Crummey (2001), sheds light on critical issues in the historiography and education of Ethiopian history. Crummey's observations about the constraints imposed by sources and the lack of critical engagement with state narratives are pivotal in understanding the broader context of Ethiopian historical education. Crummey points out that historians studying Ethiopian history have often been "trapped by our sources" (p. 9), which predominantly reflect the Solomonic culture. This limitation suggests that a specific political and cultural perspective, potentially marginalizing other voices and experiences within Ethiopian history, shapes much of the historical narrative. The reliance on sources generated by a dominant cultural force can lead to a skewed understanding of historical events and social dynamics.

Toggia (2008) assertion regarding the systematic production and dissemination of historical knowledge during Emperor Haile Selassie's government highlights significant concerns about the representation of Ethiopian history. Toggia notes that the extensive publication of history textbooks during this period was not merely an educational endeavor but also a strategic effort to reflect the narratives of politically and militarily in power. Huber (2021) observations about the teaching of history in Ethiopian high schools underscore the disconnect between educational practices and the methodologies employed by professional historians. This disconnection is particularly significant in a context where history is often manipulated to serve ideological and political agendas.

The debate surrounding Ethiopian history is a complex and multifaceted one, involving the interpretation of the country's history. The lack of comparable sources complicates the task of historians, as many accounts are influenced by external paradigms, often focusing on politically dominant groups. This selective representation can lead to a distorted understanding of Ethiopia's diverse history. The politicization of history in Ethiopia is evident in the construction and dissemination of historical narratives, which can be used for ideological purposes, shaping national identity and cultural narratives that may not reflect the realities of all Ethiopian peoples. Counter-histories have emerged in response to dominant narratives, highlighting the experiences and contributions of marginalized groups. The debate also calls for a critical examination of Ethiopian historiography, questioning the assumptions underlying historical interpretations, particularly those that rely heavily on external influences or prioritize certain ethnic narratives. By acknowledging the limitations of existing narratives and striving for greater inclusivity, historians can contribute to a richer understanding of Ethiopia's complex past and its implications for contemporary society (Toggia, 2008).

However, researchers suggest that textbooks should not be the only teaching materials in history classrooms (Shanahan, & Shanahan, 2014; Loewen, 2007; Barton, 2005). The debate surrounding the use of textbooks in history education highlights significant concerns about their effectiveness and the necessity for a more diverse approach to teaching historical content. Bain (2005) illustrates how educators can transform historical topics into large, investigable questions that encourage deeper inquiry and critical thinking. This approach aims to address the limitations of relying solely on textbooks, which often present a narrow perspective of history. Bain's insights into history education emphasize the limitations of relying solely on textbooks as primary sources of information. He argues that this one-size-fits-all approach can stifle students' creativity and hinder their ability to think independently. Instead, Bain advocates for a more interactive and engaging learning experience that incorporates text and syllabus-based questions, allowing students to explore different perspectives, evaluate evidence, and develop their own interpretations of historical events.

Today, scholars have been advocating for the inclusion of primary sources that can provide the framework for spirited classroom discussions, debates, and projects that will engage students in

memorable ways (Barton, 2005; Veccia, 2004; Wineburg, 2010). Digitized primary sources can improve historical thinking in middle and high school students when teachers train them to use them effectively (Tally, & Goldenberg, 2005). Using historical sources is an important component of doing history (Gestsdóttir, van Boxtel, & van Drie, 2018). However, not all forms of historical evidence are easily accessible to students. The teacher plays a key role in a number of different ways. The first is working with the whole class in making sources accessible through verbal, visual and interactive methods. The second is in devising activities, which will help children to 'find ways into the evidence' (Turner-Bisset, 2012, p. 27).

Historical Sources can be classified as "primary" or "secondary" (Barton, 2005). To enhance subject matter knowledge, it has recommended reading historical sources, visiting local archives, libraries, and museums. Secondary sources are information or explanations *produced after the historical event by people who were not involved* in the historical event. Secondary source information and explanations are based on primary sources and other secondary sources. Primary sources are information or explanations *produced at the time of the event and by people who were involved* in the historical event. Secondary sources provide context, ideas, and information that are essential to understanding the primary sources (Mandell, and Malone, 2008, p. 4). This indicates that an effective document set includes rich historical information, addresses questions, illustrates perspectives, includes evidence types, presents conflicting arguments, and is engaging and accessible.

The study by Sam Wineburg, as cited in the work of Hynd et al (2004), highlights significant differences in how historians and high school students engage with original source documents. This research underscores the necessity of teaching students to read like historians, which involves a more analytical and critical approach to historical texts. The historians used three specific, heuristic techniques when reading historical texts, including primary sources. The first skill is sourcing, which is a skill that asks the reader to analyze the source and purpose of the document. The second skill is contextualization. This skill requires the reader to place, appropriately, the document into its proper context in history. A third and final skill that Wineburg identified was the skill of corroboration. This skill requires the reader to make comparisons between different sources related to the document, and to compare and contrast the

sources to increase understanding of both the document and other related elements. In light of these three skills, researchers have discovered teaching strategies which, when employed appropriately, can support students as they learn how to think and reason historically (Hynd et al., 2004; Smith, 2016).

As scholars continue to engage with these issues, it becomes imperative to critically assess historical sources and narratives to construct a more comprehensive and inclusive account of Ethiopia's diverse heritage. By acknowledging the limitations of existing narratives and striving for greater inclusivity, historians can contribute to a richer understanding of Ethiopia's complex past and its implications for contemporary society.

Working with original historical sources using reading like a historian can be more engaging than textbooks or lectures as they create personal connections with history. Visual evidence like photographs, artwork, and advertisements can tap into alternative forms of knowledge and increase access to history for students who do not respond well to written texts. Material artifacts like old tools, clothes, or appliances can also be popular additions to the classroom. These sources can serve unique contributions and functions better than other approaches, making them more authentic and authentic (Barton, 2005).

Barton's recommendations for using primary sources in education, particularly in history classes, suggest a significant shift in teaching methodologies. Primary sources serve as foundational evidence for constructing historical narratives, enhancing student engagement and fostering critical thinking. One way to bridge gaps in existing Ethiopian history curricular materials is by prioritizing the Reading Like a Historian lesson and incorporating primary sources as alternatives. This method encourages students to engage with historical inquiry and develop essential skills. It ignites curiosity about the past, fostering a genuine interest in historical events and figures. Primary sources offer a window into the thoughts, emotions, and experiences of people from the past, making history more relatable and impactful. Additionally, it teaches students how to conduct research effectively, differentiate between primary and secondary sources, evaluate the credibility of materials, and synthesize information from multiple texts.

Briefly, incorporating original historical sources into education through methods like "Reading Like a Historian" significantly enriches the learning experience. By motivating inquiry, providing evidence for historical accounts, conveying detailed information about the past, and offering insights into individual experiences, this approach prepares students to think critically about history and its relevance to their lives today. As educators continue to embrace these methods, they can foster a more engaging and meaningful understanding of history among their students. As the history teacher, we have expected to create a set of documents since historical thinking concepts are related to the mastery of multiple document tasks (Merkt et al., 2017), consider how each document addresses the central question, how evidence relates to each other, and what critical reading and thinking skills the documents require students to practice and improve. Limit the number of documents provided for students.

5.7.2.3 Design Principle 3: Teaching students Reading Like a Historian skills

The third design principle of the "Reading Like a Historian" (RLH) approach emphasizes the explicit instruction of historical reading skills, which is essential for developing both generic and domain-specific reading strategies. This principle is crucial for fostering historical thinking among students and enhancing their ability to engage critically with historical texts (Nokes et al., 2007; Reisman, 2012; Stoel et al., 2017). *Explicit instruction* in this context refers to describing historical contents, evaluating historical sources, and assigning historical significance as essential for developing students' historical thinking concepts. By guiding students through these processes, teachers can help them understand the complexities of history and the ways in which historical knowledge is constructed (Gestsdóttir, van Boxtel, & van Drie, 2018).

To implement this design principle in the classroom, teachers can adopt the four key strategies that historians use to analyze documents—sourcing, corroboration, close reading, and contextualization. Mastering these skills enables students to read, evaluate, and interpret historical documents effectively, ultimately enhancing their understanding of the past (Reisman, 2012).

As we have discussed earlier in the literature review, historians use four key strategies to analyze documents: sourcing, corroboration, close reading, and contextualization. Sourcing involves examining the origin of a document to understand its author, purpose, and perspective. It involves identifying the author and their background, considering the document's date and context, and analyzing how these factors influence the content. Corroboration involves comparing multiple sources to determine their reliability and identify agreements or discrepancies. Close reading is a careful and detailed analysis of a text to uncover deeper meanings and nuances. It involves annotating texts, highlighting significant phrases, and discussing interpretations in small groups. Contextualization involves placing a document within its broader historical context to understand its significance. It involves researching the historical background surrounding a document, exploring social, political, economic, or cultural factors that may have influenced its creation. Mastering these skills enables students to read, evaluate, and interpret historical documents effectively, ultimately enhancing their understanding of the past (Wineburg, 1991).

Sourcing implementations teach students to identify the author and their background, consider the document's date and context, and analyze how these factors influence the content. For example, when examining a letter from a historical figure, students should consider the author's motivations and the audience for which it was intended**.** Corroboration implementation encourages students to gather various documents related to a specific event or theme and analyze how they support or contradict each other. This practice helps students understand that history is often complex and multifaceted. Close Reading implementation guides students through a close reading of selected passages from historical documents. They should annotate texts, highlight significant phrases, and discuss their interpretations in small groups. This method helps students appreciate the intricacies of language and argumentation within historical texts. Contextualization implementation encourages students to research the historical background surrounding a document. This could involve exploring social, political, economic, or cultural factors that may have influenced its creation. Understanding context allows students to grasp why certain events unfolded as they did.

Considering all this, by training students in sourcing, corroboration, close reading, and contextualization, teachers equip them with essential skills for analyzing historical documents. These strategies not only enhance students' ability to interpret what happened in the past but also foster critical thinking and analytical skills that are valuable across disciplines. As students become adept at these methods, they gain a deeper appreciation for history as an ongoing dialogue shaped by diverse perspectives and experiences.

5.7.2.4. Design Principle 4: Engaging students in whole-class discussion and independent learning in history

The scholarship on Reading Like a Historian emphasizes the importance of whole-class discussion in history classrooms. This involves the teacher and students negotiating historical questions using each other's ideas and texts. The goal is to build collective knowledge, practice listening, speaking, and historical interpretation, while actively listening and learning from others' contributions (Reisman et al., 2018). Effective whole-class discussion in history classes involves talk moves that draw students' attention to the text and stabilize historical content (Reisman, 2015a).

Drie and Boxtel (2008b, p. 148) suggest several strategies for history teachers to promote collaborative historical reasoning during whole-class discussions. These include actively *engaging students*, *encouraging peer responses, building on ideas, summarizing contributions, implementing waiting time, asking questions* to stimulate critical thinking, and introducing historical reasoning components. These strategies aim to enhance student engagement and critical thinking, allowing them to explore historical interpretations and arguments collectively. They also encourage students to discover their misunderstandings and prompt peer responses. By incorporating historical reasoning components, these strategies create an environment where students feel comfortable engaging with complex historical concepts.

Whole-class text-based discussions are integral to cooperative and collaborative learning strategies, as highlighted by Borich (2018, p. 358). These discussions facilitate the development of essential cooperative attitudes and values among learners, enabling them to think

independently both inside and outside the classroom. Cooperative learning is characterized by small group interactions where students work together towards common goals. This method promotes positive interdependence, individual accountability, and face-to-face interaction, which are crucial for effective learning experiences.

The *Reading Like a Historian* (RLH) curriculum utilizes a *Document-Based Learning* (DBL) approach, structured around four specific phases of instruction that enhance students' historical thinking and analytical skills. To begin with, students begin by acquiring essential background knowledge related to the historical event under study. This foundational phase prepares them to engage deeply with the primary sources they will encounter later. Next, begin to analyze a central historical question. In this phase, students read a central historical question and collaborate with the teacher to analyze it. This ensures that they comprehend the question's context and significance, setting the stage for further inquiry. After completing their analyses, students participate in a whole-class discussion facilitated by the teacher. This discussion is crucial as it allows students to apply their historical thinking concepts, engage with their peers, and collaboratively answer questions related to the primary sources and the historical event (Reisman et al., 2018, p. 21).

Finally, whole-class discussions centered on central historical questions provide a dynamic learning environment where students can actively engage with content, develop critical thinking skills, and practice the interpretive methods used by historians. This approach not only enriches their understanding of history but also equips them with valuable skills for future academic and civic endeavors (Reisman, 2012). This implies that for effective classroom discussions that activate prior knowledge and promote efficient group work, teachers should consider several key points in their planning and implementation. First, the lesson should be carefully planned by considering every phase, with a clear lesson plan to give a clear role to students in order for them to carry out their tasks adequately. Tasks should be organized allowing cooperative work and opportunities for students to do ‘hands-on activities’, to think, to feel, and to interact.

Borich (2018) insights highlight the critical role of student responsibility in facilitating effective historical discussions. By carefully planning lessons, managing classroom dynamics, and

fostering respectful dialogue, teachers can create an environment where students feel empowered to engage deeply with historical content and with one another. This approach not only enhances learning outcomes but also prepares students for collaborative interactions beyond the classroom setting.

5.7.3. Designing Future History Education: Constructive learning Experiences and a pedagogical Framework for Reimagining Ethiopian Secondary Education Curricula

Reading like a historian does not serve to train future historians, but future citizens. The recent emphasis on introducing an 'inconclusive' curriculum that embraces multiple perspectives is a significant aspect of Ethiopia's new education development roadmap. This shift aims to foster critical thinking and historical inquiry among students, reflecting a broader commitment to reforming the educational landscape in the country (2018-30) (Teferra et al. 2018, p. 66). Furthermore, the Ethiopian General Education Curriculum aimed at improving secondary school students' "analytical, critical, reflective, logical thinking" (MoE, 2018, p.29).

The proposal to implement the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) method alongside document-based instruction in Ethiopian secondary schools represents a significant shift in history teaching methodologies. This approach aims to enhance historical thinking concepts and engage students in active learning, aligning with contemporary curriculum standards. Engle, & Conant (2002) abstract section suggest that productive disciplinary engagement can be fostered by designing learning environments that support problematizing subject matter, granting students authority, holding them accountable to disciplinary norms, and providing relevant resources, which enhances cognitive activity, engagement, and learning outcomes across various educational contexts. However, successful implementation requires careful consideration of various factors, including time availability, school leadership, teacher competence, resource availability, student numbers, and classroom layout. Additionally, teachers' strategies and attitudes are crucial for the effectiveness of these lessons (Wineburg, Martin, & Monte-Sano, 2012).

5.8. The Transformative Potential of RLH in Fostering Critical Inquiry and Historical Empathy

The RLH strategy transforms history education by fundamentally shifting the focus from passive memorization of facts to active interpretation and critical inquiry. Students are no longer merely recipients of historical narratives; they become active participants who learn to work with historical sources, ask "why" and "how" events occurred, and evaluate evidence from multiple perspectives. This approach not only deepens students' understanding of historical content but also cultivates essential transferable skills such as sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration, which are valuable across academic disciplines and in real-world contexts.

For teachers, adopting RLH fosters increased confidence in facilitating historical discussions and designing document-based lessons, empowering them to move beyond traditional lecture formats. For students, the method makes history relevant and interactive, fostering greater classroom participation and intellectual curiosity, as evidenced by the significant improvements in motivation and engagement. The interactive nature of RLH, through discussions, debates, and inquiry-based assignments, cultivates a deeper appreciation for history as a dynamic and interpretive discipline, rather than a static collection of facts. Furthermore, the intervention showed potential for fostering historical empathy, encouraging students to interpret past events through the "mentality, frames of reference, and values" of historical agents, thereby avoiding anachronistic judgments and promoting a more nuanced understanding of human experiences across time.

3.9. The "Paradox of Competency-Based Reform"

Ethiopia's recent curriculum reform explicitly articulates a significant shift from an objective-based to a competency-based education model, aiming to address local needs and align with global educational trends. Yet, the findings consistently reveal that traditional, fact-based teaching and assessment remain dominant. This creates a “paradox of competency-based reform.” The shift to competency-based learning is primarily a declarative policy change, a statement of intent. However, the operational realities of the educational system—including deeply ingrained teacher beliefs (e.g., "The facts speak for themselves"), the design of

instructional materials that prioritize lower-order thinking skills, the structure of assessments that do not effectively measure higher-order competencies, and systemic resource limitations—are not yet aligned to support this new paradigm.

The system itself acts as a powerful inertial force, resisting the intended reform. The RLH intervention, while demonstrating success on a small scale, highlights the immense systemic inertia that must be overcome for widespread, sustainable reform. This implies that policy changes, no matter how well-intentioned or globally aligned, are insufficient on their own to drive educational transformation. True reform requires a holistic, coordinated effort that simultaneously addresses teacher capacity building (both pedagogical and epistemological), curriculum and textbook redesign, and a fundamental overhaul of assessment paradigms to ensure they genuinely measure the desired competencies. Without this multi-pronged approach, policies risk remaining aspirational rather than transformative, leading to a persistent gap between reform rhetoric and classroom reality.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1.Summary of the Major Findings

Introduction

This study aimed to evaluate and implement the *Reading Like a Historian (RLH)* strategy to improve history education in Ethiopian secondary schools by exploring teachers' epistemic beliefs and preparedness, analyzing textbook content and assessment alignment, asessing RLH's impact on pedagogy and student motivation. This dissertation employs a Design-Based Research (DBR) framework to investigate the implementation of the *Reading Like a Historian* (RLH) strategy in Ethiopian Grade 10 history classrooms. The study addresses critical gaps in Ethiopia's history education, including teacher-centered pedagogy, rote memorization, and misalignment between curriculum goals and assessment practices. Data collection tools included pre- and post-tests, interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, enabling a comprehensive understanding of both the process and impact of the RLH intervention across a seven-week intervention involving 134 students and 16 teachers, the research explores five key questions.

In response to the first research question regarding teachers' epistemic stance, findings revealed that most teachers held a naïve realist perspective—viewing history as a fixed set of facts rather than a contested and interpretive discipline. This stance limited their capacity to foster historical thinking in students. Such epistemological beliefs strongly shaped instructional practices and created resistance to adopting inquiry-based methods. To address this, the study recommends embedding disciplinary literacy and epistemological reflection into both pre-service and in-service teacher education programs. Future research should explore how sustained professional learning communities can support shifts in teachers' beliefs over time.

Analysis of Grade 10 history textbooks provided insight into the second research question, which focused on the integration of substantive and procedural historical knowledge. Over 65% of the assessment tasks analyzed were geared toward lower-order thinking, primarily factual recall, with minimal emphasis on skills such as sourcing or corroboration. This misalignment with Ethiopia's competency-based curriculum undermines the development of higher-order thinking

skills. It is recommended that textbooks and assessments be revised to promote tasks such as source analysis, argumentative writing, and multi-perspective evaluation. Future comparative research could assess patterns across regions or grade levels to inform systemic curricular reform.

The third research question explored teachers' conceptions of the purpose of history education and their knowledge of historical thinking practices. Many teachers emphasized the role of history in moral instruction and national identity formation, often neglecting its analytical dimensions. Their unfamiliarity with historical thinking frameworks and limited experience with source-based instruction further reinforced traditional, didactic teaching. Professional development programs should, therefore, include structured training in historical thinking pedagogy and practical, contextualized models like RLH. Longitudinal studies could provide insight into how these conceptions evolve through targeted professional learning experiences.

Addressing the fourth research question, the study found that RLH can significantly enhance pedagogical practices, even in resource-constrained contexts. Teachers effectively adapted RLH lessons using locally relevant sources and engaged students in question-driven inquiry and group-based learning. This shift away from lecture-dominated instruction demonstrated that RLH is not only feasible but also scalable in Ethiopian classrooms with limited technological infrastructure. To support wider adoption, modular training programs and collaborative resource hubs are recommended. Further research should evaluate RLH's scalability in diverse educational settings, including rural and under-resourced schools.

The fifth and final research question examined the impact of explicit RLH instruction on teachers and students. Teachers reported increased confidence in facilitating inquiry and evaluating student arguments, while students showed marked improvement in key historical thinking skills—sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration. Moreover, previously disengaged students became more motivated and participatory. RLH thus supported student agency, historical empathy, and critical thinking, all of which align with the national curriculum goals. Embedding RLH in teacher education curricula and employing performance-based assessments (e.g., historical essays, debates) will further institutionalize these gains. Long-term studies could evaluate RLH's effects on academic achievement, civic reasoning, and historical consciousness.

In general, the findings affirm that Reading Like a Historian is a transformative and contextually responsive instructional strategy. It bridges the gap between curricular aspirations and classroom realities by promoting student engagement, critical inquiry, and interpretive skills. Through the DBR framework, the study generated actionable design principles that can guide scalable and adaptable implementations of RLH in Ethiopian secondary education and comparable contexts.

6.2. Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the current state of history education in Ethiopia, focusing on teachers' epistemological beliefs, textbook content, instructional practices, and the impact of inquiry-based interventions such as Reading Like a Historian (RLH). The findings reveal that while criterialist beliefs-emphasizing critical thinking and evidence-based reasoning-are nominally favored, many teachers continue to rely on objectivist and subjectivist stances, often defaulting to rote memorization and fact-based instruction. Textbook analysis further underscores this trend, with a predominant focus on lower-order thinking skills and limited opportunities for students to engage in higher-order historical reasoning. Interviews and survey data highlight gaps in teachers' conceptual understanding and practical application of historical thinking skills, as well as challenges posed by rigid curricula and a lack of diverse instructional resources. The study further revealed significant challenges, including teachers' reliance on traditional, fact-based instruction, limited exposure to historical thinking concepts during their training, and a misalignment between curriculum goals and classroom practices. Despite these obstacles, the RLH intervention demonstrated positive impacts on student engagement, critical thinking, and teachers' pedagogical practices. The findings underscore the need for a transformative approach to history education that balances substantive knowledge with procedural skills, aligning with Ethiopia's competency-based curriculum framework. Finally, the implementation of RLH strategies demonstrated significant improvements in students' epistemological views, motivation, skills in using textbooks, and classroom engagement.

6.3. Implication of the Study

This study contributes to the growing body of research on historical thinking in non-Western contexts, offering practical insights for improving history education in Ethiopia. By embracing RLH strategies, educators can transform history classrooms into dynamic spaces where students critically engage with the past, develop essential analytical skills, and become informed citizens. This study reveals that history teaching in Ethiopia remains predominantly textbook-driven and teacher-centered, which limits opportunities for students to develop critical historical thinking and inquiry skills. Despite curriculum frameworks emphasizing 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and Multiperspectivity, actual classroom practices often fall short. This study underscores the need for Ethiopian history teachers to shift from traditional, textbook-based instruction to inquiry-oriented methods like *Reading Like a Historian (RLH)*. RLH enhances students' historical thinking by teaching them to analyze sources, corroborate evidence, and construct evidence-based arguments—skills critical for 21st-century learning. The successful implementation of the Reading Like a Historian (RLH) strategy demonstrates that inquiry-based approaches can transform classroom dynamics by fostering student engagement, deeper content understanding, and critical analysis of historical sources. For teachers, adopting RLH means shifting toward more student-centered, inquiry-driven instruction, emphasizing the construction and interpretation of historical knowledge rather than rote memorization. This requires ongoing professional development and support to help teachers integrate these strategies effectively and consistently as current practices remain dominated by rote memorization and teacher-centered approaches by adopting RLH, educators can foster deeper engagement, critical analysis, and a more nuanced understanding of history, aligning with Ethiopia's competency-based curriculum goals.

Teacher training programs must bridge the gap between theory and practice by integrating historical thinking concepts into pre-service and in-service teacher education. Many Ethiopian teachers lack exposure to sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration strategies during their training, limiting their ability to teach these skills. Effective professional development should include hands-on workshops, collaborative lesson planning, and access to primary and secondary sources. Strengthening teacher preparation in inquiry-based methods will empower educators to

cultivate students' analytical skills and historical reasoning, ensuring curriculum reforms translate into meaningful classroom practice. Training should also address contextual challenges, such as large class sizes and limited resources, and provide teachers with practical tools for fostering student engagement and critical analysis. Incorporating RLH strategies into teacher preparation programs will help future educators move beyond traditional, fact-based instruction and embrace methods that promote deeper understanding and critical thinking in history classrooms.

The findings underscore the need for curriculum reform that goes beyond policy statements and is reflected in everyday classroom practice. Teachers are central to the success of any educational reform, acting as the primary agents who interpret and deliver the curriculum. Improving history education in Ethiopia will require revising textbooks and assessments to emphasize higher-order thinking skills, analytical tasks, and the use of diverse historical sources. Ensuring that teachers are equipped and motivated to implement these reforms is essential for bridging the gap between curricular intentions and actual student learning outcomes.

For researchers, this study highlights the value of design-based research (DBR) in developing, implementing, and refining educational interventions. Future research should prioritize transparent documentation of intervention processes and outcomes, making it easier to replicate and adapt successful strategies in other contexts and diverse classroom settings. Researchers should also explore how technology and localized resources can facilitate RLH adoption in resource-limited environments like Ethiopia. These implications point to the urgent need for a systemic shift in history education, where teachers are empowered through training and resources to implement inquiry-based, student-centered approaches that foster critical thinking and prepare students for the complexities of the modern world.

Collectively, these implications highlight the need for systemic changes in teaching practices, teacher training, and research methodologies to advance history education in Ethiopia. By prioritizing historical thinking, investing in teacher capacity, and employing rigorous DBR approaches, stakeholders can transform history classrooms into spaces of critical inquiry, preparing students to engage thoughtfully with the past and present.

6.4. Recommendation

To transform history instruction in Ethiopia requires coordinated action among teachers, policymakers, curriculum developers, and researchers to ensure that reforms translate into effective classroom practice. Primarily, teacher education programs should be redesigned to foreground the interpretive and analytical dimensions of history. Moving away from rote memorization, these programs must emphasize criterialist epistemological beliefs and historical thinking skills. Both pre-service and in-service teacher training should offer hands-on experiences with primary and secondary sources, collaborative lesson planning and reflective teaching practices. Universities and teacher training institutions should revise their curricula to integrate explicit instruction in inquiry-based methods, sourcing, corroboration, contextualization, and the use of diverse historical materials.

Curriculum developers and textbook authors are encouraged to align learning outcomes and assessments with all levels of cognitive demand. This means incorporating more open-ended, source-based, and analytical activities that promote higher-order thinking. Textbooks should be redesigned to include a wider range of perspectives, primary sources, and inquiry-based tasks. Assessment strategies should move beyond multiple-choice and factual recall, integrating document-based questions, evidence-based writing, and performance assessments that measure students' ability to analyze, interpret, and construct historical arguments.

At the policy level, educational standards and assessment frameworks should be harmonized with global best practices, ensuring that students acquire the critical skills necessary for academic success and responsible citizenship. Policymakers should allocate funding for ongoing teacher professional development, resource development, and research into effective history pedagogy. Schools should be encouraged to diversify instructional resources by leveraging technology and collaborating with cultural institutions and archives to make historical materials accessible. The creation of an online repository of Ethiopian primary and secondary sources tailored for classroom use would be a significant step forward.

Directions for future research include conducting longitudinal studies to assess the enduring impact of RLH interventions, exploring its adaptability across Ethiopia's diverse linguistic and cultural regions, and investigating its influence on students' historical consciousness and civic competencies. Additionally, developing and validating alternative assessment models grounded in historical reasoning, empathy, and analytical writing will further enhance the transformative potential of RLH in history education.

Final recommendations include reforming textbooks and assessments to prioritize higher-order thinking, embedding RLH into teacher professional development frameworks, and integrating inquiry-based strategies into national education policy. Sustained investment in teacher training, resource provision, and reflective practice is essential to achieving these goals. It is essential to advocate for policies that prioritize historical thinking and inquiry in national education standards. By implementing these recommendations, Ethiopia can bridge the gap between curriculum policy and classroom reality, fostering a more engaging, relevant, and effective history education that prepares students for the complexities of the modern world.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Historical Thinking Chart

Historical Reading Skills	**Questions**	**Students should be able to . . .**	**Prompts**
Sourcing	• Who wrote this? • What is the author's perspective? • When was it written? • Where was it written? • Why was it written? • Is it reliable? Why? Why not?	• Identify the author's position on the historical event • Identify and evaluate the author's purpose in producing the document • Hypothesize what the author will say before reading the document • Evaluate the source's trustworthiness by considering genre, audience, and purpose	• The author probably Believes------ • I think the audience is- • Based on the source information, I think the author might-------- • I do/don't trust this document because-------
Contextualization	• When and where was the document created? • What was different then? What	• Understand how context/ background information influences the content of the document	• Based on the background information, I understand this document differently

	was the same? • How might the circumstances in which the document was created affect its content?	• Recognize that documents are products of particular points in time	Because------- • The author might have been influenced by (historical context) . . . • This document might not give me the whole picture because . . .
Corroboration	• What do other documents say? • Do the documents agree? If not, why? • What are other possible documents? •What documents are most reliable?	• Establish what is probable by comparing documents to each other • Recognize disparities between accounts	• The author agrees/disagrees with. . • These documents all agree/disagree about . . . • Another document to consider might be . . .

Close Reading	• What claims does the author make? • What evidence does the author use? • What language (words, phrases, images, symbols) does the author use to persuade the document's audience? • How does the document's language indicate the author's perspective?	• Identify the author's claims about an event • Evaluate the evidence and reasoning the author uses to support claims • Evaluate author's word choice; understand that language is used deliberately	• I think the author chose these words in order to . . . • The author is trying to convince me . . . • The author claims . . . • The evidence used to support the author's claims is . . .

Appendix B: Scoring rubrics for Analyzing *Reading Like a Historian* Skills

Reading like a Historians Skills	Description of scoring criteria	Demonstration of competencies in RLH
Sourcing (Wineburg, 1991b; Avishag Reisman, 2012; Stéphane Lévesque and Penney Clark, 2018).	The act of identifying the blurb of a document before reading the text, examining its type, author(s), and reliability. This helps readers understand the text's attribution, including the author, date, type, and reliability. It provides a mental framework for readers to assess the source's reliability against bias, purpose, and author background, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the information and message included.	Students should be able to: ● Identify the author's position on historical events. ● Identify and evaluate the author's purpose in producing the document. ● Hypothesize what the author will say before reading the document. ● Evaluate the source's trustworthiness by considering bias, author's background, and author's purpose, taking into account genre,

		audience, and purpose.
Contextualization (Wineburg and Abby Reisman, 2015; Wineburg, 1991b; Stéphane Lévesque and Penney Clark, 2018).	The act of situating a document in a specific time and place, allowing readers to resolve contradictions, identify patterns, and distinguish between evidence types. It involves questioning the social and political context of the text to gain insight into the historical period. Critical historical readers focus on the author's words, prevailing norms, and the reasons behind producing the source. Contextualization helps prevent presentism, which is the imposition of a present-era interpretive framework. However, the success of these heuristics depends on personal interpretation and personal leeway.	Students should be able to: ● Comprehend the impact of context and background information on document content and acknowledge that documents are a result of specific historical events.
Corroboration (Wineburg, 1991b; Avishag Reisman, 2012 and Stéphane Lévesque and Penney Clark, 2018).	The act of comparing accounts from multiple sources to gain a broader understanding of historical events, even when they disagree on key details. When multiple sources agree, readers can take greater stock of their accuracy. Differences in the use of corroboration heuristic reflect differing beliefs about historical evidence. For historians, corroboration is essential as every account is seen as reflecting a particular point of view. The question is not "Is the source biased?" but "How does a source's bias influence the quality of its report?"	Students should be able to: ● Establish what is probable by comparing documents to each other ● Recognize disparities between accounts
Close reading (Cowgill, & Waring, 2017; Reisman, 2012)	The method of identifying the source information of a document, allowing the reader to contextualize it, identify potential bias, and question the author's motivations. It also helps in understanding the motivations of individuals in the text and provides a comprehensive understanding of the events. It directly relates to sourcing, as assessing a	Students should be able to: ● Identify the author’s claims about an event ● Evaluate the evidence and reasoning

	document's argument, word choice, or tone requires understanding the author's perspective and purpose.	the author uses to support claims ● Evaluate author's word choice; understand that language is used deliberately

Appendix C: Pre-intervention Teachers' Responses to semi-structured interview questions

Coding scheme

Question	Components of PCK for teaching history	Answer and elaboration of Teacher A as quoted	Answer and elaboration of Teacher B as quoted
What do you want students to learn about this topic?	Knowledge of curricular contents	❖ Sheds light on the 19thC long distance trade in Ethiopia and the Horn ❖ The roles the cottage industry played in the socio-economic development of Ethiopia ❖ The process of making modern Ethiopian state ❖ External aggression and the heroic resistance ❖ The power struggle among the ruling elites from 1906-1930 ❖ The Fascist Italian aggression	I went to teach my students to understand the meaning, origin, process and trade routes of long distance trade.
Why is it important for students to know this?	Knowledge of Curriculum competencies /expectations	❖ [To] examine the interaction among people and state in Ethiopia in relation to the long distance trade. ❖ [To] identify major socio-economic and political reforms of the period ❖ [To] describe the causes for external aggression ❖ [To analyze] the unity of Ethiopian	It is important because the students can understand what I mentioned in question number-1.

		people in defence of national sovereignty	
How are they learning?	Knowledge of curriculum instructional strategies	❖ [Students] be in a group and report to the class	They learnt by lecturing of their teacher
What kind of difficulties do you expect your students to encounter?	Knowledge of students understanding	❖ Large number of students in the class and absence of reference books	Lecture method
What is your knowledge about your students' thinking that influences your approach teaching this topic?	knowledge of students	❖ [Students] lack of experiences and interest to learn in group discussion, they expected lecture method	My knowledge of understanding about my students are asking question at the end
What are other factors that influence your idea of teaching?	Factors influencing the idea of teaching include intrinsic motivation, social utility values, personal beliefs, teaching experiences, organizational constraints, and self-efficacy.	❖ More than 60 students in one class ❖ Rush for comprehensive content coverage to be taught within 2 periods per week.	There is no other factor that affects my teaching but lack of primary sources are a considerable factor.
What kind of lesson activities would you use?	Knowledge of engaging students in multiple sources by activities	❖ How did trade become the most important in the relations between peoples in Ethiopia ❖ Mention the economic importance of the cottage industry ❖ Mention the reforms made by	My lesson activity is fixed only lecturing

		Tewodros II ❖ Which African country was considered the main threat to Ethiopia in the 1870s? ❖ What was the cause of the battle of Adwa?	
How much time do you expect to need to execute these activities?	suggest that the time needed to execute activities varies significantly depending on the project and method used	❖ To the minimum two months (8 periods)	Two periods
Describe two or three key assignments.	In-class assignments, after-class assignments, and homework, which serve to assess learning, enhance engagement, and support teaching quality.	❖ Identify the process of the making modern Ethiopia state 1855-1913 ❖ Describe external aggression and the Ethiopian resistances	Where was the origin of Ethiopian LDT of the mid-19th century? List the trade routes of LDT of 19th C? Discuss the role of Negadras and importance of Ethiopian LDT of 19th C.
What kind of materials would you use along with the text?	Suggest using a variety of historical materials, including extracurricular resources and modern multimedia techniques, to enhance history teaching and address the needs of diverse learners.	❖ Extracting different guiding materials from library, local archives, online materials and etc	Textbook only

How do you assess the understanding of the topic by your students?	Knowledge of Assessments	❖ Pre-test and post evaluation ❖ Day to day follow up and report ❖ By giving different activities	By asking question at the end of the lesson for two minutes

Appendix D: Overview of the Unit of Intervention

GRADE 10 Ethiopian History: Social, Economic and Political Developments in Ethiopia mid 19thC. To 1941

1. Unit Introduction

The unit deals with the colonial past in history textbooks of Ethiopia from the time of the coming to power of Emperor Tewodros II in 1855, up to the liberation of the country from the Italian occupation in 1941. The first section of the unit sheds light on the nineteenth century long distance trade and the roles the cottage industry played in the socio-economic development of the country. The second section of the unit focuses on the process of the making of Modern Ethiopian State during the reigns of Tewodros II (1855-68), Yohannes IV (1872-89) and Menilek II (1889-1913). Here attempts have been made to explore their administrative reforms, modernization attempts, religious reforms, the centralization policy and territorial expansions. The third section of the unit is about external aggressions and the heroic resistance of the people of Ethiopia to preserve the territorial integrity of their country. Here you will study about the Napier Expedition, the Egyptian aggression, the Mahdists invasion, which was concluded at the battle of Metema and the Italian encroachment into Ethiopia territory, which was sanctioned by the glorious battle of Adwa in 1896. Moreover, the section sheds some light on the boundary delimitation with the neighbouring colonial powers. The fourth section of the unit deals with the power struggle among the ruling elites from 1906 to 1930 and the beginning of the autocratic rule of Haile Sellase I (1930-35). Therefore, the section focuses on the problems of succession, *Lij* Iyassu and his reforms, the diarchy or dual rule and the emergence of autocracy. The final section of the unit deals with the Fascist Italians aggression and the Ethiopian patriots' resistance. The issues included in the section are: background, causes and courses of the Italo-Ethiopian War, Fascist rule and its subsequent changes, the patriotic resistance movement and liberation of Ethiopia from the Italian occupation.

	DBQ Lesson	
Topic		
Class / Period		
Required time / number of lessons		
Focus question(s)		
Key (historical) concepts		
Prior knowledge / experience		
Grade 10, History Textbook	UNIT THREE: Social, Economic and Political Developments in Ethiopia, Mid. 19th C. to 1941	Total Periods Allotted: 14 Periods (Approximate Time Required: One month with three Weeks)

Key Unit Competence:

- ✔ Examine the interactions among people and states in Ethiopia in relation to the long distance trade;
- ✔ Identify major socio-economic and political reforms of the period;
- ✔ Describe the causes of external aggression and its consequences;
- ✔ Recognize the unity of Ethiopian people against foreign aggression.

Instructional Sequences of Activities

Elements of Historical Inquiry	What the teacher does (I Do) Teacher directed	Disciplinary Strategies (We Do) **Shared**	What the students do (You Do) Student directed	Finding Sources
Selecting and contextualizing the historical contents	Teacher selects the historical topic and provides substantive knowledge important for contextualizing the topic.	Students select a historical topic from a list of teacher provided options. Teacher provides some substantive knowledge, and students identify additional	Students select the historical topic and identify the substantive knowledge important for contextualizing the	

		substantive knowledge important for contextualizing the topic.	topic.	
Asking historical inquiry questions	Teacher provides a historical inquiry question.	Students' select historical inquiry questions from teacher-provided options, or students develop historical inquiry questions with teacher support.	Students develop their own historical inquiry questions.	
Identifying historical evidence	Teacher identifies the historical evidence.	Students' select historical evidence from teacher provided options, and/or students identify additional evidence with teacher support.	Students identify their own historical evidence.	
Analyzing evidence and drawing conclusions	Teacher provides methods, tools, and instruction to help students analyze evidence and draw conclusions.	Students' select methods and strategies for analyzing evidence from teacher provided options, or teacher provides some instructional support to help students analyze evidence and draw conclusions.	Students' identify methods and tools to analyze evidence and draw conclusions.	
Representing and communicating findings	Teacher selects the product or performance students will use to represent and communicate their findings with others.	Students' select the product or performance they will use to represent and communicate their findings with others with teacher support or from provided options.	Students' select the product or performance they will use to represent and communicate their findings with others.	

Appendix E: Reading Like a Historian Lesson Plan designed for Intervention

Instructional Curriculum Components of Reading Like a Historian Lesson Plan

First week, Day- 1 & 2

Ethiopian Grade 10 History curriculum alignment	3.1. Long Distance Trade in 19th Century			Periods Allotted: 2
Class / Period				
Required time / number of sessions				
Learning outcomes:				
Establishing students' background knowledge: - The origins of a cottage industry in Ethiopia date back to ancient times. The most common cottage industries were metalworking, pottery, tannery, carpentry, masonry, weaving, jewelry and basket making. Although artisans and craftsmen were not respected in Ethiopia, they played irreplaceable roles in the socio-economy of the country				
Instructional Sequence of activities				
Starter	What the teacher does (I Do)	Disciplinary Strategies (We Do)	What the students do (You Do)	Finding Sources
Asking Historical Questions: Transforming Key Competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes)	Key (historical) concepts Substantive knowledge domain (content knowledge)	Procedures and Scaffolding: how historical thinking and reasoning is supported	**Grouping** Making an assignment around Learning Tasks/activities, argumentation, Whole-class discussion	**(digital) Historical sources**
● pinpoint the major market centres in the nineteenth century Ethiopia; (Highlight the key characteristics of long-distance trade in	● The Trade Routes, People's Interaction, Major Market Centres, the Medium of Exchange, and Trade Items ● The Role of	Reading Like a Historian Lessons Sourcing	1. Introduce a topic and ask students to be in small groups, discuss and see how many of them are familiar with the following concepts:-	•Map of Ethiopia and the Horn •Sketch map which indicates the trade

Ethiopia) ● Describe the salient features of the long distance trade in Ethiopia; ● Appreciate the roles the cottage industry played in the socio-economic life of the Ethiopian people. (Recognize the significant contributions of the cottage industry to the socio-economic wellbeing of the Ethiopian community) ● *Pinpoint* the most important handicraft or cottage industries in Ethiopia (Identify the key handicraft or cottage industries in Ethiopia.)	Cottage Industries	Contextualizing Corroboration Close Reading	☞the long-distance trade ☞trade routes ☞items of trade 2. Group students into five to list the different trading items of 19th C. compare it with the contemporary trading items in Ethiopia., and give their own critiques. Give chance for students to draw sketch map to locate major trade routes and notable market centres 3. •Ask students what they think about the roles of cottage industry in the Ethiopian economy. 4. -Students visit selected local craftsmen at work and report on their observations for class discussion. (let students discuss if crafts workers are the basis for development of technology and industry in Western World, how people	routes •Produces of cottage industry available in your locality •Pictures and videos which show products cottage industry Sorenson, John. "History and Identity in the Horn of Africa." *Dialectical Anthropology* 17, no. 3 (1992): 227-252.

			treat them in your locality?) 5. Ask students what they think of the impact of the long distance trade in the integration and unity of the people of Ethiopia; the advantageous and disadvantageous of the business 6. Class discussion on the significance of cottage industries in Ethiopia today; let the students suggest strategies to be employed by concerned bodies to improve cottage industries in Ethiopia. 7. Let the teacher explain how peoples of Harar, Afar, Somali, Oromo, Amhara, Sidama, Gibe Oromo States, Leqa Neqamte, Leqa Qellem and Omotic States interacted in the long trade routes. What was the contribution of the peoples of peripheral areas)Afar, Tigray, Somali, Gambella Beni-Shangul Gumuz etc)in the frontier trade and in the long distance trade	

(formative) Assessment

Sample Essential Questions:

Activity 3.1

1. Identify the traders who dominated the long-distance trade in Ethiopia and the Horn in the nineteenth century.
2. How did trade become the most important catalyst in the relations between peoples and politics in Ethiopia and the Horn?

Activity 3.2

1. Give an individual reading assignment to students to be in a group and report to the class the raw materials used for making the above handicrafts products (pots, cloth and lemat) and
2. Mention the economic importance of the cottage industry.

Instructional Curriculum Components of Reading Like a Historian Lesson Plan

Second Week, Day 1, 2 and third week, Day 1

Ethiopian Grade 10 History curriculum alignment	**3.2. The Making of Modern Ethiopian State 1855-1913**	(3 Periods)
Class / Period		
Required time / number of lessons		
Learning outcomes:		
Establishing students' background knowledge: - Elicit student's prior knowledge on the Zemene Mesafint in Grade 9. Ask them to reflect their views to the class. The process of making modern Ethiopia involved the unification of regions and principalities found in northern and north central parts on the one hand and territorial expansion into the southern half of the country on the other. Emperors like Tewodros, Kassa Mircha or Emperor Yohannes IV, and Menelik II played a pivotal role in the process of making		

modern Ethiopia.				
Instructional Sequence of activities				
Starter	What the teacher does (I Do)	Disciplinary Strategies (We Do)	What the students do (You Do)	Finding Sources
Asking Historical questions: Key competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes)	Key (historical) concepts Substantive knowledge domain (content knowledge)	Procedural knowledge domain (pedagogical knowledge)	Learning Tasks/activities and Constructive assessments	(digital) Historical sources
▪ Outline major attempts of modernization taken by Tewodros II; ▪ explain the causes, processes and impacts of unification and territorial expansion ▪ Explain administrative reforms and modernization attempts administrative made by central and regional leaders ▪ Compare and contrast the roles played by Tewodros II, Yohannes IV and Menilek II in the making of modern Ethiopia. ▪ Analyse the methods employed for territorial expansion into South, southeast and	● the Rise of Kassa Haylu ● the Reforms of Tewodros ● the move towards administrative centralization ● Administrative reforms, modernization attempts ,and religious reforms 1855-1913 ● People's reaction against centralization policy ● The impacts of Unification and territorial expansion during the reigns of Tewodros, Yohannes and Menelik ● People's Reactions against	Reading Like a Historian Lessons Sourcing Contextualizing Corroboration Close Reading	▪ Students: be in group and write your arguments on the causes, process and impacts of unification during the three emperors based on sources ▪ What made Tewodros II different from his predecessors and contemporaneous? Identify approaches/policies of three Emperors to centralize the state and territorial expansion. ▪ What were the factors for the expansion of three Emperors? Ask students if Yohannis's measures were significantly different from that of Tewodros. Did Menelik II follow the policy of power devolution like Yohannes? ▪ 'Ethiopia was right to start a policy of modernization,' Do you agree? Students debate in groups the causes, process and impacts of	Research class Image analysis; structured academic debates with clear instructions for searching for historical materials

southwest ▪ Analyze the reactions of the subdued peoples in south, southwest, and south-eastern Ethiopia. ▪ Distinguish the main features of the land tenure system of the period under discussion ▪ Examine the nexus between the states, society and land ▪ Define madarya land and Gabbar-malkagna, Gabbar- Naftagna ▪ Write paper on different forms of land tenure in north and south Ethiopia	Imperial Expansion, 1855-1913 ● Salient features of the land tenure in the north and the south		modernization. ▪ Explain major attempts of modernization during Tewedros II, Yohannis IV and Menelik II. Ask students to evaluate whether these reforms. Let them explain why they answered as they did. ▪ Compare and contrast religious reforms and policies undertaken during the imperial period. How did the religious policy of Yohannes treated Islam in Wollo? What kind of policy did Menelik II follow in terms of religion in the territory he determined? What kind of religious policy did Menilek II follow in Arsi,Bale, Sidamo, Somali … during his expansion? ▪ Compare and contrast how the peoples of Wollo and Shoa reacted against Tewodros campaign? What about Gojjam, Wollo and Shoa during Yohannes? How the people of Gurage, Oromo in Wallaga, Gibe, Arsi, Harar, Illubabor, and peoples of Walayta, Gamo Gofa, Kafa, Sidama, Gedeo, Kambata, Hadya, Gambela, Beni-Shangul Gumuz, Somali, Afar and others reacted against Menelik expansion? What was the role played by the local chiefs, kings, sultans, sheikhdoms of these peoples? What	

			do we mean by the Gabbar-Maligna System? *Gabbar-Neftegna*? Do you think land tenure systems in the north and south were similar or different? Form two groups and answer the above by giving examples. Explain how the Gult system transferred into *madarya* land.	
Sample Essential Questions: **Activity 3.3 Individual work:** 1. Mention the reforms made by Tewodros II. 2. Mention the two provinces where Tewodros made campaigns immediately after his coronation. 3. Compare and contrast Tewodros's campaigns to Wallo and Shewa.				

Instructional Curriculum Components of Reading Like a Historian Lesson Plan

Third week Day 2 & Day 3; fourth week, Day 1

Ethiopian Grade 10 History curriculum alignment	3.3. External Aggressions and Responses to Foreign Aggression (1821-1896)	Total Periods Allotted: 3 Periods
Class / Period		
Required time / number of lessons		

Learning outcomes:		

Establishing students' background knowledge: - The territorial integrity of Ethiopia had been threatened by foreign aggressors like Egypt during Khedive Ismail, the Mahdist Sudan in the 1880s, Great Britain during the Napier expedition and Italy in the 1880s and 1890s. Tewodros's detention of British and European citizens led to the coming of the British mission to Ethiopia under the leadership of Sir Robert Napier which led to the downfall of Tewodros. The Egyptians perennial quest to dominate the sources of the Abay River reached its climax during the reign of Yohannes IV. However, Yohannes defeated the Egyptians' at the battles of Gundet and Gura in 1875 and 1876 respectively. The confrontation between Yohannes IV and the Mahdists caused by Yohannes's signing of the Hewett or Adwa Treaty in 1884 with the Egyptians/British led to the tragic death of Yohannes IV at Matamma. Yohannes IV also managed to contain the advance of the Italians into the northern part of Ethiopia and even scored a resounding victory over the Italians at Dogali in 1887. Menelik's love and hate relations with Italians reached a climax with the signing of the Treaty of Wuchale in 1889. However, the difference between the Amharic and the Italian versions of article XVII of the treaty became the causes of the conflict between Italy and Ethiopia. Hence, it became cause for the Battle of Adwa, where the Ethiopians scored a shattering victory over the Italians.

Instructional Sequence Activities

Starter	What the teacher does (I Do)	Disciplinary Strategies (We Do)	What the students do (You Do)	Finding Sources
Asking historical questions (knowledge, skills and attitudes)	Key (historical) concepts Substantive knowledge domain (content knowledge)	Procedural knowledge domain (pedagogical knowledge)	Learning Tasks/sequences of activities and constructive assessments	(digital) Historical sources
▪ explain the causes of the British military expedition led by General Napier; ▪ recognise the attempts of Egyptians to dominate the Nile basin ▪ unravel (mention) the results of the Hewett	▪ Tewodros and Great Britain ▪ Yohannes and the Egyptians ▪ Yohannes and the Mahdists ▪ Menelik and the Italians	Reading Like a Historian Lessons Sourcing Contextualizing Corroboration Close Reading	Teachers may start the lesson by the following brainstorming questions: ● Identify and write the foreign powers who attempted to violate Ethiopia's territorial integrity in the second half of 19th C. ● Mention at least four	gives clear instructions when contextualizing Political cartoon analysis; context building

Treaty; ▪ Mention the consequences of the Wuchale treaty for the birth of Eritrea as an Italian colony? ▪ pinpoint the causes and effects of the battle of Adwa ; ▪ Appreciate the heroic resistance of the Ethiopian people against foreign aggression. ▪ Criticize the consequences of Wuchale treaty for the birth of Eritrea as an Italian colony	(Reactions in Borderlands; The Napier Expedition The battle of Magdala; The battles of Gundat, Gura The Dogali Incident The battle of Metema The battle of Adwa The Role of Women in the Battles)		battles where Ethiopia scored decisive victories over foreign aggressors in the second half of 19th C. ● Teacher: give a short lecture on how the **Afar and Somali** people defended foreign threats during European colonial expansion. What was the role of the peoples of Benishangul Gumuz against Mahdist incursions? Give a brief lecture on how people of Ethiopia reacted against foreign aggressions at the battle of Magdala, Gundat, Gura, Dogali and Metema. Teacher: give summary on questions like: was there competition between regional lords one against each other during wars of foreign aggressions? Ask the question; who benefited most from the Treaty of Wuchale? Students discuss and then feedback to the class. Teacher pulls together a short lecture on the Treaty. Let students read from the textbook the cause and results of different battles made from 1821-1941 and produce a time chart.	course Internet-based courses; evidence based courses; Lesson from Stanford History education Group, Reading Like a Historian: Battle of Adwa

			Read the poem produced by some famous Ethiopian poets about Adwa and explain the essence of the poem (Lorate Tsegaye Gebremedhin) Group work: Students make a library research to produce a one-page summary of short-term and long-term consequences of the battle both at national and global levels and present their findings to the class. Teacher pulls together the main points and arguments. Teacher: give a brief lecture on the contributions of unity of nations and nationalities for the victory of Adwa.	

Sample Essential Questions:

Activity 3.4 Pair work:

1. What caused the conflict between Tewodros II and the British?
2. Which African country was considered the main threat to Ethiopia in the 1870s?

Activity 3.5 Think-pair-share

1. Who were the commanders of the Ethiopian force at Adwa?
2. What was the cause of the Battle of Adwa?
3. Elaborate the difference between the Amharic and the Italian Versions of Article XVII of the Treaty of Wuchale.
4. How did Italy Lose to Ethiopia? (1895). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hln0GjuUQk.

Instructional Curriculum Components of Reading Like a Historian Lesson Plan

Fourth Week Day 2 & 3; Fifth Week, Day 1

Ethiopian Grade 10 History curriculum alignment	4.4. Inception of Power Struggle Among the Ruling Elite, 1906 to 1936	Total Periods Allotted: 3 Periods
Class / Period		
Required time / number of lessons		
Learning outcomes:		

Establishing students' background knowledge: - The beginning of the decline of the health of Menilek II in 1906 marked the onset of a power struggle in Ethiopia. For some time, *Empress* Taytu came to play an influential role until the Shewan nobility removed her from the palace. Meanwhile, the death of *Ras* Tesema Nadew, the regent, in 1911 paved the way for Iyasu's ascendancy to power. The Shewan nobility and foreign powers united to overthrow Lij Iyasu in 1916, which led to the Coronation of *Empress* Zawditu and the designation of Teferi as regent. The period from 1916 up to 1930, which was dominated by the power struggle between Zawditu and Teferi is termed the Diarchy or dual rule. In 1930 Haile Sellase was crowned king of kings of Ethiopia, and this sanctioned the victory progressive over the conservative camp, who were on the side of the Empress of Zawditu.

Instructional sequences of Activities

Starter	What the teacher does (I Do)	Disciplinary Strategies (We Do)	What the students do (You Do)	Finding Sources
Key Competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes)	Key (historical) concepts Substantive knowledge domain (content knowledge)	Procedural knowledge domain (pedagogical knowledge)	Learning Tasks/activities and constructive assessments	(digital) Historical sources

▪ pinpoint the measures Emperor Menilek took to avert power struggle among his successors; ▪ describe the reforms of Lij Iyasu; ▪ analyse the salient features of the period of diarchy; ▪ identify the measures Emperor Haile Sellase took to consolidate his absolute power.	● Problems of succession ● *Lij* Iyassu and his policy ● The Diarchy ● Emergence of Autocracy	Reading Like a Historian Lessons Sourcing Contextualizing Corroboration Close Reading	1. Let students argue on the significance of the ministerial system of 1907 in Ethiopia and the tradition of power succession in the Imperial period. 2. Teacher: give students an assignment to write a paragraph about "Why succession problem began in 1906 and what was the solution given? "What was the reason for the power struggle between Lij Iyasu, Taytu & Shoan nobility? List the reforms of *Lij* Iyasu and the impacts of his reforms. 3. Ask students to outline measures that made him popular on the one hand, and measures made him unpopular on the other. Then let them weigh the two and feedback their conclusions on Lij Iyassu's downfall to the class. 4. Explain briefly about the Diarchy. Then discuss with students its key features in the class. 5. Describe the individuals and groups who were siding the contending power struggles between Empress Zewditu and Teferi Mekonnen. What kinds of reforms were introduced during the	Internet-based courses; evidence based courses open textbook Analyze student writing and legal literature

			Diarchy?	

Sample Essential Questions:

Activity 3.6

1. Mention the stakes of the signatories of the tripartite treaty of 1906.

Activity 3.7:

1. Who were the protagonists at the Battle of Sagale?
2. Why did the notables challenge Teferi Mekonnen during the period of diarchy?

Activity 3.8: Write short answers for the following questions.

1. Mention the features of the 1931 constitution of Ethiopia.
2. What measures did Emperor Haile Selassie take to consolidate his absolute power?
3. Which regional rulers lost their autonomy in the 1930s soon after Haile Selassie was crowned Emperor of Ethiopia?

Instructional Curriculum Components of Reading Like a Historian Lesson Plan

Fifth week Day 2, Sixth Week Day 1, and 2

Ethiopian Grade 10 History curriculum alignment	**4.5. Italian Fascist Italian Aggression and Patriotic Resistance (1935-1941)**			Total Periods Allotted: 3 Periods
Class / Period				
Required time / number of lessons				
Learning outcomes:				
Establishing students' background knowledge: - The lesson is about the Second Italo-Ethiopian War, the Italian Occupation and the Ethiopian Patriots' Resistance against the occupation.				
Instructional Sequences of Activities				
Starter	What the teacher does (I Do)	Disciplinary Strategies (We Do)	What the students do (You Do)	Finding Sources
Key Competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes)	**Key (historical) concepts** Substantive knowledge domain (content knowledge)	Procedural knowledge domain (pedagogical knowledge)	Learning Tasks/activities and constructive assessments	**(digital) Historical sources**
● state the causes of the Second Italo-Ethiopian War ● identify the major fronts during Fascist Italy's invasion ; ● appreciate the heroic resistance of the Ethiopian patriots during the Italian	● Background ,Causes and courses of the war ● Fascist rule and its subsequent changes ● The Patriotic resistance movement and liberation. ● The role of Women patriots during the	Reading Like a Historian Lessons Sourcing Contextualizing Corroboration	Let students search for key informant / patriot or military officer /in their locality ask him/her about the contribution of the local community during the resistance movement fascist aggression ; and the role of women in defending there people and country , and present his finding to the class Teacher: give students an assignment	Open textbook and compare stories from different textbooks

occupation.	resistance movement	Close Reading	to mention where the patriots made heroic resistance against the Italian fascist rule. List patriot women who played prominent roles in the patriotic resistance. Why were Italians unable to control all rural areas of Ethiopia since their arrival up to 1941?	

Activity 3.9

1. What was the pretext that the Italian used when they invaded Ethiopia in 1935?

Activity 3.10

1. Why did Italians succeed in 1936 where they had so miserably failed in 1896?

Activity 3.11

1. Discuss the roles of the Ethiopian Women during the Patriotic resistances against the Italian Occupation.
2. Write a short profile of Shewareged Gedle.

Appendix F: Students Constructed-Response Scoring Sheet

Sourcing: _____

_____

_____

Source A: _____

_____

_____

Source B: _____

Contextualization:

Source A:

Source B:

Corroboration:

Source A:

Source B:

Close reading:

Source A:

Source B:

Appendix G**:** Pre-and Post-Test Questionnaires for Students

The purpose of this questionnaire is to evaluate the effectiveness of history education by examining four critical components: students' experiences and interest in learning history, the quality of textbooks and the teaching methods and instructional materials employed by teachers. Understanding how these elements interact can provide valuable insights into enhancing history education and fostering student motivation and engagement.

Direction I: Thank you for participating in this questionnaire! Your insights are invaluable for understanding the effectiveness of history education. Please feel free to answer the following questions at your own discretion. The researcher is asking for your voluntary participation in a questionnaire, which is not related to your grades or class assignments. The researcher, not your teacher or classmates, will only see your responses.

Direction II: Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts on your experiences with history education. Your responses will help us understand how various factors influence student engagement and interest in learning history. Please consider the following questions carefully and respond to each one based on your personal experiences. The first 18-questions ask about your experience and interest in history classes. The Second 9 questions are asking your perception of the appropriateness of history textbooks at your grade level. The third 8 questions ask about your belief in the influence of teachers and instructional materials they have used during classroom teaching. The last -14 questions on your belief about the way your teachers taught and engage and motivate you in history education.

Your responses to these questions will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of history education. Thank you for sharing your experiences! If you have any additional comments or suggestions, please feel free to include them at the end of the questionnaire. Your input is greatly appreciated!

Part-I **Students' epistemological views on history and their motivation to learn it**
1. I perceive learning history as the gathering and accumulations of information.
2. I believe that studying history is essential.

3.	I believe that learning history primarily revolves around understanding dates, names, and places.
4.	I believe it is important to critically examine history textbooks.
5.	I am interested in studying history.
6.	I view historical narratives and the past as essentially identical.
7.	I find it engaging to read history textbooks.
8.	I intend to study history at a higher level.
9.	I take pleasure in participating in history classes
10.	My history teacher employs various techniques to teach students about the contents of history.
11.	I feel responsible for my learning about history through analysis and interpretation.
12.	My history teacher offers us opportunities for group discussions.
13.	In our history classes, we primarily focus on reading the textbook and responding to questions.
14.	In our history classes, we primarily engage in listening to the teacher's lectures and taking notes.
15.	In our history classes, our primary sources of learning include letters, images, maps, and various artifacts from the past.
16.	In our history classes, we primarily engage in field trips and compose essays.
17.	In our history classes, we utilize websites and software applications to investigate various facets of the past.

18. In our history classes, we engage in discussions and debates.
Part-II **The essence of history textbooks from students' perspectives**
1. I believe that history textbooks are engaging and offer a wealth of resources.
2. I consider history textbooks to be the primary source for exploring historical questions.
3. I found that the historical texts, sentences, and languages presented in textbooks are quite comprehensible.
4. I feel bored when reading history textbooks because the contents are too much and many facts need to be memorized.
5. When I read history textbooks, I am able to visualize a historical event through the narrative and the accompanying illustrations.
6. I can readily understand the historical content, context, and perspectives when I read history textbooks.
7. The activities and exercises included in the textbooks stimulate my ability to think both critically and creatively.
8. I found a History textbook that includes details about a website that offers supplementary information.
9. I found history textbooks contain a wealth of valuable primary and secondary resources.
Part III: **Teachers' skills of using textbooks from students' perspectives**
1. My history teacher incorporates suitable texts into his teaching methods
2. My history teacher relies solely on textbooks as teaching resources, without incorporating additional sources.
3. My history teacher can relate the contents in textbooks with the latest issues.
4. My history teacher consistently adjusts the lesson of history as deemed appropriate.

5. My History teacher consistently employs subject-specific strategies to enhance my understanding of the contents covered in the textbooks.
6. My history teacher continually enriches our history classes by employing various historical sources as valuable educational resources.
7. My history teacher poses learning objectives into questions to enhance our comprehension of historical contents.
8. My history teacher requires us to Think-Pair-Share and present the outcomes of our discussions to the class.
Part IV **Students on the teaching methods employed by their teacher**
1. We, as students, participate in the teaching and learning process by exchanging ideas on the subject.
2. We, as students, are motivated to seek knowledge and resources outside of the traditional classroom environment.
3. As students, we engage in writing historical arguments to elucidate various controversial topics in the history classroom
4. In history class, my teacher poses historical questions about historical contents and requires students to provide answers.
5. My teacher takes pauses before and during lessons to allow students to ask questions or reflect their prior knowledge.
6. My teacher employs probing and open-ended questions to draw out information from the students.
7. My teacher actively involves students through a variety of activities designed to enhance their historical knowledge and understanding.
8. My teacher organizes groups for assigned activities that are to be presented in class, allowing for a whole class discussion among all students.
9. My teacher motivates students to engage in critical thinking and develop innovative solutions to historical questions through

document-based analysis.
10. My teacher provides access to historical sources during class for the purposes of reading, reflection, and writing on historical questions.
11. Sometimes, resource persons are invited to teach specific topics in history.
12. My teacher uses digital tools for teaching history
13. My history teacher uses materials like wall maps, charts, globe, and pictures when teaching.
14. My teacher uses online databases, interactive maps, and multimedia resources for history teaching in classroom

Adapted from Nathalie Popa (2021)'s questionnaire

Appendix H: CoRe Questionnaire

Guiding questions on the Long Distance Trade in Ethiopia of 19th century	Answer
2. What do you want students to learn about this topic?	
3. Why is this important to them?	
4. How are they learning?	
5. Where and when are they learning?	
6. What kind of difficulties do you expect your students to encounter?	
7. What is your knowledge about your students' thinking that influences your approach teaching this	

topic?		
8.	Are there other factors that affect your approach to teaching this topic?	
9.	What kind of lesson activities would you use?	
10.	How much time do you expect to need to execute these activities?	
11.	Describe two or three key assignments.	
12.	What kind of materials would you use along with the text?	
13.	How do you assess the understanding of the topic by your students?	

Appendix I: Observation Protocol for History Teaching Analysis

Two key instruments were used: (1) a checklist to track RLH (Reading Like a Historian) lesson implementation, and (2) a mean score tracker assessing seven instructional categories on a 4-point Likert scale. The scoring methodology was adapted from established studies on historical thinking instruction (Britt & Aglinskas, 2002; De La Paz, 2005; Nokes et al., 2007; Gestsdóttir et al., 2018).

Table 13: Observation Protocol.

No.	Categories/ Questions	The number of lessons observed in each class was 14.	Rating scales			
			4	3	2	1
1	Do teachers effectively communicate learning outcomes by transforming history curriculum competencies into focused historical questions as a starting point of the lesson?	Teacher A				
		Teacher B				
2	Do teachers elicit students' prior historical knowledge?	Teacher A				
		Teacher B				

3	Do the teachers use historical sources to enhance both substantive historical knowledge (contents of history) and procedural knowledge (historical thinking)?	Teacher A				
		Teacher B				
4	Do teachers effectively communicate the diverse perspectives, historical context, historical thinking, and interpretations that exist within their field?	Teacher A				
		Teacher B				
5	Did teachers implement Reading Like a Historian lesson plan designed for this study with explicit classroom instruction?	Teacher A				
		Teacher B				
6	Do teachers engage students in Reading Like a Historian strategies individually or in-group tasks, performance activities, assignments?	Teacher A				
		Teacher B				
7	Do teachers' facilitate a whole-class historical discussion, argumentation, and evidence-based claims among students?	Teacher A				
		Teacher B				
	Total					

Appendix J: Mean and Standard Deviation of Teacher Ratings across 14 Lessons

Lesson	Activating students prior knowledge		Communicating learning outcomes		Asking Historical question		Using sources and presenting multiple perspectives		Applying RLH Strategies		Engaging students' in activities, tasks, assignments		Facilitating whole-Class discussion, argumentations and evidence based claims		Mean	
	TrA	TrB	TrA	TrB	TrA	TrB	TrA	TrB	TrA	TrB	TrA	TrB	TrA	TrB	TrA	TrB
1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	3	2	3	3	3	3	2.29	2.00
2	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	3	2	3	3	2	3	1.86	2.00
3	4	4	1	2	4	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	2.29	2.14
4	4	4	2	2	4	4	1	2	2	1	1	2	3	1	2.43	2.29
5	4	2	2	3	3	3	1	2	2	1	3	2	3	1	2.57	2.00
6	2	1	4	2	3	3	3	4	2	2	2	1	1	2	2.43	2.14
7	1	1	4	3	3	1	2	3	4	4	4	4	1	2	2.71	2.57
8	1	1	1	4	3	1	3	2	4	4	3	4	2	2	2.43	2.57
9	3	3	3	4	4	4	1	2	3	4	4	3	2	3	2.86	3.29
10	2	4	3	1	2	4	2	3	2	2	4	3	1	1	2.29	2.57
11	2	2	2	2	3	4	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	2.29	2.14
12	4	2	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2.43	2.14
13	3	3	1	4	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	1	2	2	2.00	2.57
14	4	3	2	4	2	1	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	2	2.43	2.71
Mean	2.43	2.29	2.14	2.36	2.79	2.36	1.93	2.14	2.57	2.43	2.71	2.43	2.14	2.07	2.39	2.30
SD	1.28	1.14	1.17	1.15	0.89	1.15	0.73	0.86	0.76	1.02	0.91	0.94	0.77	0.83	0.28	0.39